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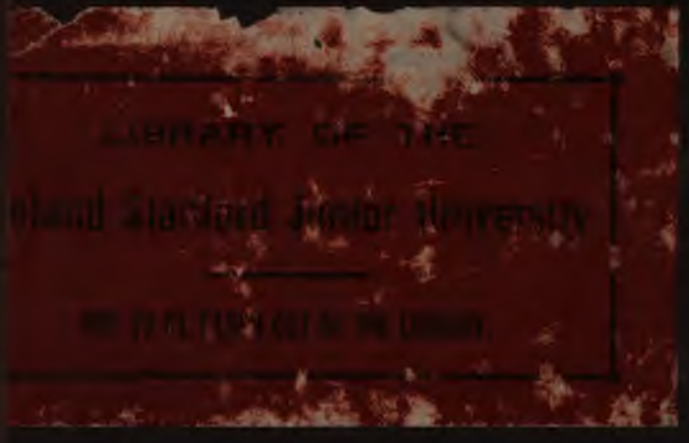

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THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

VOL. IX.

1780–1782

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G. P. Putnam's Sons

March, 1891

THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON

COLLECTED AND EDITED

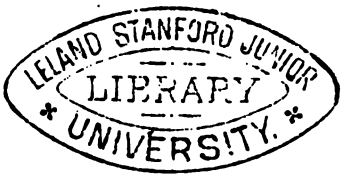
BY

WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD

VOL. IX.

1780–1782

NEW YORK AND LONDON
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
The Knickerbocker Press
1891



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Press of
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
New York

CONTENTS OF VOL. IX.

1780.

PAGE

To Governor Reed, October 19th 1

No distinction as to prisoners of war—Not belonging to State —Cases of Simcoe and Conolly—Citizens and military prisoners.

To Major Lee, October 20th 4

Proposed attempt to capture Arnold—He must be brought in alive—To be made a public example.

To Major-General Heath, October 21st . . . 5

Disposition of troops at West Point—Removal of stores—The French minister.

To the President of Congress, October 21st . . 6

The British in Carolina and at the north—Situation of Fort Pitt—Measures for its relief—Movements of the English from Canada.

To Major-General Greene, October 22d . . . 9

Instructions.

To George Mason, October 22d 12

Introducing Major-General Greene—The distress of the army—Living upon expedients—False hopes and temporary devices—A new plan essential—Details of the reform.

To Major-General Gates, October 22d . . . 15

Announcing the appointment of Greene—The inquiry into his conduct.

To the Board of War, October 25th 16

Suspicions of treason to be cautiously followed—Doubts on the good motives of the deserter.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, October 30th . . 17

Means, not wishes, to be considered—An enterprise on New York not warranted—Lack of intelligence.

To Governor Nash, November 6th 18

Thanking him for intelligence—Enemy may suffer in the southern colonies—Their detachments and objects—No aid can be sent from the main army.

PAGE

To Robert Carter Nicholas, November 7th . . 20
Legislation against loyalists—The case of Col. Fairfax.

To the President of Congress, November 7th . . 21
Operations in the north—Reinforcements sent from West Point to Albany—Little prospects of magazines—Enemy in New York well supplied—Necessity for laws against trading with the enemy—Exchange of prisoners effected—Further propositions made—The convention troops.

To Major-General Greene, November 8th . . . 25
Financial depression—Construction of flat-bottomed boats—A subscription suggested—Power to exchange prisoners—Impossible to supply arms—Movements of the armies.

To William Fitzhugh, November 8th . . . 27
Prospect of a favorable campaign vanished—Accounts from the South—Regulating and completing the army—Enormous expense ruinous.

To Governor Jefferson, November 8th . . . 28
Affairs to the southward—The convention troops—Flat boats to be provided.

To Major-General Heath, November 16th . . 30
Conduct of a forage to cover another movement.

To John Sullivan, November 20th 32
Reform of the army—The call upon the States for specific supplies—Multiplicity of business in Congress an obstacle to improvement—Executive matters should be committed to boards or individuals—Problem of clothing the men—A remedy thrown out—A foreign loan indispensable—The shifts of the last campaign cannot be repeated—The relief of the southern States.

To Sir Henry Clinton, November 20th . . . 37
Propositions for an exchange of prisoners.

To John Sullivan, November 25th 39
Promotions and the case of Knox—Irregular promotions work a permanent injury.

To the President of Congress, November 28th . . 40
Winter quarters at New Windsor—General disposition of the army—The resignation of Col. Scammell—Tallmadge's exploit.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, December 8th . . 43
His departure for the south—Should depend upon the news from Europe.

PAGE

To Gouverneur Morris, December 10th . . . 45

Enterprise against New York—Force of the enemy and of the American army—Not money or credit to buy boards for doors to huts—No money for his table—An attempt considered and abandoned—Difficult even to move army to cantonments.

To Count de Rochambeau, December 10th . . 47

French visitors—Approves quartering troops in Connecticut—Intelligence from New York.

To Major-General Lincoln, December 11th . . 49

Misfortunes of a temporary army—Places of deposit for provisions—Default on the part of some of the States—Want of clothing.

To Major-General Greene, December 13th . . 52

His new knowledge of the complicated difficulties of the army—Nothing to apprehend on the score of public dissatisfaction—Mrs. Greene—Discharge of the levies—The office of Adjutant-General.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, December 14th . . 54

No money for expresses—His command over the French at Rhode Island very limited—Best to postpone a correspondence with Spanish generals—The Spanish manœuvres important—Exchange of Colonel Neuville.

To Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier de Ternay, December 15th 57

An embarkation of the British—Importance of driving British from the south—No prospect of obtaining men there—An expedition by Spain against Florida—Proposes to co-operate with the Spanish—General outline of his plan—Reasons why the Spaniards should enter into the co-operation.

To Governor Trumbull, December 17th . . . 62

Interference by a State with the cantonment of troops.

To John Sullivan, December 17th 63

On promotions—Sometimes one army, sometimes thirteen armies—Lineal promotion the most equitable and satisfactory mode—The want of fixed principle the cause of difficulty and discontent—His efforts to destroy State distinctions—Under prevailing ideas, promotions should be lineal in each State to the rank of brigadier—The appointment of brigadiers—Of major-generals—Present system regimental to captains, and in the line of the State beyond that—The case of the Jersey line—The propriety of new appointments—The less the States have to do with men in the field the better.

PAGE

To the President of Congress, December 20th . . 68
On promotions—A general rule proposed—Results of irregular promotions—Brigadier- and major-generals—Seniority and States.

To Benjamin Franklin, December 20th 73
Chastellux—Forced inaction of the army—Operations to the southward.

To Lieutenant-Colonel David Humphreys, December 23d 74
Instructions.

To James Duane, December 26th 75
Greater powers in Congress, and more responsibility and permanency in the executive bodies—Want of clothing—Necessity alone can justify present mode of obtaining supplies—An example—On promotion—Difficulty of remedying an irregular promotion—General Knox.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, December 26th . . 78
His serving in the southern army—Intelligence from France—Movements of the British.

To Governor Jefferson, December 28th 81
The reduction of Detroit important—No Continental force can be sent, but Continental stores may be used—The men at Fort Pitt available—Officers in State service recommended for Continental commissions.

1781.

To the President of Congress, January 2d . . 85
The case of General Stark—A successor for Colonel Scammell—A British detachment to the south.

To Brigadier-General Wayne, January 3d . . . 87
Meeting of the Pennsylvania line—Opposition may drive the men to the enemy—A removal of Congress.

To the New England States, January 5th . . . 91
Circular letter on the mutiny.

To the President of Congress, January 6th . . 93
The progress of the mutiny—Advised not to leave headquarters—Governor Clinton ready to call out militia—Circular letter to the Eastern States—Dangerous to further test the patience of the army.

PAGE

To Brigadier-General Wayne, January 8th . . 96
His decision to remain—Troops with him quiet—Justice to mutineers, and a certain degree of generosity may conciliate or divide them—Not to be driven to enemy or dispersed.

To Major-General Greene, January 9th . . . 98
Sympathy for his difficulties—No clothing from France—Dispute between Baron Steuben and General Smallwood about rank—Preposterous conduct in releasing prisoners.

To Major-General St. Clair, January 12th . . . 100
Defiant attitude of the mutineers—To consult on the measures to be taken.

To Lieutenant-Colonel John Laurens, January 15th . 102
State of American affairs—Succor from abroad indispensable—The "want of wealth" the true cause of embarrassment—Restoration of the credit of the currency—Specific supplies ineffectual and burthensome—Resource of domestic loans inconsiderable—Patience of the army is exhausted—Heavy taxation may not be endured—An aid of money essential, and an active campaign of vast importance—A naval superiority on the coast the most interesting object—Reinforcement of troops desirable—But money more important—The credit of America—Several reflections.

To the President of Congress, January 15th . . 110
On the expediency of removing the French troops to Virginia—Reasons for not going to the Pennsylvania line—A reserve magazine.

To Mrs. Sarah Bache, January 15th 113
Acknowledgment of the patriotic exertions of the women of Philadelphia.

To Count de Rochambeau, January 20th . . . 114
Causes of the mutiny—In a train of being settled—Visit of some French gentlemen—Chain of expresses—Unable to visit Newport at present—Enemy ready to take advantage of any disturbances—Colonel Laurens to confer with him.

To the Executives of the States, January 22d . . 117
Revolt of the Jersey line—Sharp measures taken to suppress it—Weakness of the garrison had prevented such action with the Pennsylvania as the circumstances called for—The settlement will have a pernicious influence—Call for supplies.

PAGE

To the officer commanding the British fleet at New York, January 25th 119
Suffering of American naval prisoners at New York—An examination into their condition desired.

To the Commissioners for redressing the grievances of the New Jersey line, January 27th . . . 121
Determined to suppress disorder—Measures taken—In doing justice to their complaints caution necessary about enlistments—Error in treating with the Pennsylvanians.

To Major-General Howe, January 29th . . . 123
Troops to remain near the Jersey brigade.

To Robert R. Livingston, January 31st . . . 124
Complaints of the citizens of New York State—Committees may proceed too far—Changes in administrative system required.

To the President of Congress, February 3d . . 126
Want of a proper gradation of punishments—A great part of the vices of our discipline due to that—Capital punishment too frequent—Changes suggested—The increase of arbitrary punishments—The granting of furloughs and discharges.

To Major-General St. Clair, February 3d . . . 129
Recruiting the Pennsylvania line—Instructions for recuiting agents—Fraudulent discharges—Should be treated as deserters.

To John Sullivan, February 4th 131
Appointment of ministers—Colonel Hamilton—Improper management the cause of distresses—Accession of Maryland to the Confederation—Grant of Virginia—Scheme to borrow coined specie and plate—Traffic with New York enormous—Men of all descriptions engaged in it—Increase the powers of Congress.

To Governor Jefferson, February 6th . . . 135
British incursion into Virginia—Importance of sending a reinforcement from Virginia to the southern army—Objects of Arnold's operations—The British fleet has suffered through a storm.

To Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Hillegas, Mrs. Clarkson, Mrs. Bache, and Mrs. Blair, February 13th . . . 138
The contribution for the army.

To Count de Rochambeau, February 15th . . 139
The Chesapeake expedition—A land force essential—Has put under marching orders a detachment of troops—Arnold's force—Importance of his capture.

PAGE

To Brigadier-General Knox, February 16th . . 144
Private instructions.

To the President of Congress, February 17th . . 145
Danger of too great confidence in the southern States—Artillery for an attempt upon New York.

To Abraham Skinner, February 17th . . . 147
Exchange of officers of the Convention troops—The exchange of Burgoyne—Prisoners taken by State militia—Returns for Governor Livingston—Desires him to reside near headquarters.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, February 20th . . 149
Instructions.

To Elbridge Gerry, February 20th 152
Hurt by the general complexion of Mr. Lovell's letter—Its publication by the enemy unfortunate.

To Governor Jefferson, February 21st . . . 153
Expedition of Destouches—March of Lafayette—Pilots.

To Governor Trumbull, February 21st . . . 155
Clothing for recruits—Neglect of recruiting agents.

To Major-General St. Clair, February 22d . . . 156
Pennsylvania troops for the south—Their transport.

To Major-General Parsons, February 22d . . . 158
Tories in Stratford and Fairfield counties—A dangerous association.

To the Chevalier Destouches, February 22d . . 159
The Virginia expedition—Hope of blocking Arnold.

To Count de Rochambeau, February 24th . . 161
A prospect of an end to the war—Anniversary of his birthday—His visit to Rhode Island.

To Governor Clinton, February 24th . . . 163
On leaving two regiments in the State—Cannot grant the wish—Detachments from the army make an increase necessary.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, February 25th . . 164
Intelligence from New York—Increase of the British fleet at Gardiner's Bay checks operations of French—Boats for debarking troops—Provisions—Movements at the south.

To John Mathews, February 26th 167
Southern prisoners—Exchange of civil prisoners difficult to effect.

PAGE

To the President of Congress, February 26th . . 168
Situation in the south alarming—Particular successes have prejudiced general and substantial principles—The French movement abandoned—The plan to capture Arnold—Employment of American vessels.

To Major-General Lincoln, February 27th . . 170
Laurens' departure—Payment of invalids—Advices from General Greene—Pardon for deserting an encouragement.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, February 27th . . 172
Directions for his operations.

To John Parke Custis, February 28th . . . 173
Should not be disgusted when matters are not to his liking—Indispensable duty of a patriot—Necessity of a permanent force—The powers of Congress—Ablest men should be in Congress—A nominal head no longer of avail.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, March 1st . . . 177
The French plan—Preparations for receiving the fleet—Lest Arnold may escape, greater latitude given.

To Governor Hancock, March 17th 180
Regrets his inability to visit Boston—Want of reinforcements.

To Benjamin Harrison, March 21st 182
The proposition to pension his mother.

To Major-General Heath, March 21st . . . 185
Complaints of the Massachusetts field-officers—Reasons for the changes in officers—Need of field-officers—No intended slight.

To William Fitzhugh, March 25th 188
Political measures—Short enlistments—Powers of Congress—Southern affairs—The failure of the expedition to Virginia.

To Major-General Armstrong, March 26th . . 192
Past experience a guide to future action—Interpositions of divine government—Backwardness of the States.

To Benjamin Harrison, March 27th 194
Efforts to protect the southern States—General situation as to men, arms, and clothing.

To the Board of War, March 30th 198
Combination of departments—Danger attending a change at the opening of a campaign—Criticisms on the scheme.

PAGE

To Major-General Lincoln, April 4th . . . 200
Efforts of the enemy to be concentrated against the south—Reinforcements—The collection of militia.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, April 6th . . . 202
Reinforcing Greene's command—Reasons for recalling his detachment and forming another—Gimat and Galvan.

To Count de Rochambeau, April 7th . . . 205
Junction should be deferred—French troops not essential until an attack on New York is determined—Intelligence will decide.

To the President of Congress, April 8th . . . 207
Urgent calls for recruits disregarded—Reported recourse to short enlistments—Future operations in consequence uncertain—Lafayette ordered to join Greene—The Pennsylvania corps—Dissatisfaction in the New York line for want of pay.

To Colonel John Laurens, April 9th 209
Interesting events since his departure—The intended operation to the south, and its failure—At this hour suspended in the balance—Deliverance must come now or never—Operations practically suspended for want of money.

To Count de Rochambeau, April 10th . . . 213
The Penobscot expedition—Circumstances to be considered.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, April 11th . . . 216
His movements—Disaffection—No operation intended against New York—The New Jersey line stands next for detachment.

To the President of Congress, April 16th . . . 218
Exchange of Burgoyne.

To Major-General Greene, April 18th . . . 220
His policy commended—The position of Steuben—Thanks to troops—The Pennsylvania mutiny—Good words spoken for him.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, April 21st . . . 223
Wishes him to return to the main army.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, April 22d . . . 224
The question of his return—His private letter to Lund Washington—Rivington not to be trusted—The Hamilton incident.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, April 22d . . . 227
Concerned at the temper of his detachment, and the desertions—Defence of southern States committed to States south of Pennsylvania—The attempt upon New York—General situation and prospects.

PAGE

To Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, April 27th . . 229
Embarrassed by his request—His merit and ability beyond dispute.

To Count de Rochambeau, April 30th . . . 231
His intercepted letter—Has no copy, and letter may have been changed by the enemy—The general import—Letter a private one—His intention.

To Major Benjamin Tallmadge, April 30th . . 234
Intelligence from the Culpers.

To Lund Washington, April 30th 236
Concerned that he should supply the enemy with provisions—Bad example thus set—A refusal only should be given—Prepared for the loss of his negroes and destruction of his house.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, May 4th . . . 238
Lund Washington's conduct condemned—His judgment misled—Papers wanted.

To the President of Congress, May 8th . . . 240
The inquiry into Gates' campaign—Distress of the army for provisions—Alarming situation at every post—Steps taken to procure flour—Supplies for the French troops—Heavy cannon.

To John Sullivan, May 11th 244
Principles of promotion still unacted upon by Congress—Absolute necessity of determining some rule—The case of Tench Tilghman—Appointment of executive officers—The want of a financier of character.

To Philip Schuyler, May 14th 246
Intelligence—Dispositions of the Vermonters—At present a dead weight, but may be made of service—Want of provisions at frontier posts—Heath sent to the eastern States.

To the President of Congress, May 17th . . . 250
An interview to be held with the French commanders—Surprise of an advanced post.

Substance of a conference between General Washington and Count de Rochambeau at Weathersfield, 22d May, 1781 251

To the Chevalier de la Luzerne, May 23d . . . 254
Intended march of the French army—The object to be New York—The West India fleet—Needed in the proposed operations.

PAGE

Circular Letter to the States, May 24th 256

To the President of Congress, May 27th 259

The Weathersfield conference—Outline of the conclusions—The battalions to be completed—Nothing but the most vigorous exertions will suffice—Invasion of the northern frontier—Evacuation of Fort Schuyler.

To John Sullivan, May 29th 262

His plan impracticable—The Weathersfield scheme of operations—The executive officers.

To Major-General Greene, June 1st 265

His difficult operations will increase his reputation—The combined plan of operation—Some British sent to the south—Recruits for his army.

To Count de Rochambeau, June 4th. 268

Proposed alteration of plan—The harbor of Boston safer than that of Newport—Call for militia—Importance of hastening the division against New York.

To the President of Congress, June 6th 271

The convention troops—Objection to their being exchanged—General Gates' position—Rule of promotion—The capture of letters.

To John Mathews, June 7th 273

Hopeful in spite of adverse circumstances—The appointment of Morris—American prisoners at Charleston—Difficulties in the way of an exchange.

To Governor Jefferson, June 8th 274

Purposes of the enemy in Virginia—His presence at the north essential—Southern States to be relieved by an operation against New York—Enemy must be followed, if a move to the south is made.

To Col. William Crawford, June 9th 277

His western lands—Land grabbers in possession—How to be dealt with—Simpson.

To Count de Rochambeau, June 13th 280

The second council of war—Urges that there be no delay in his march—Intelligence from the south—Count de Grasse and his movements—The attempt upon New York.

To Governor Clinton, June 21st 284

The incursion from Canada—The recall of the Continental troops—Militia to take their place—Brigadier-General Stark.

PAGE

To President Reed, June 24th 286
Need of riflemen—Expense to be Continental—Constitution of the corps.

To Count de Rochambeau, June 30th . . . 288
Favorable opportunity to strike at New York—Measures to be taken—Surprise of Delancey—Secrecy enjoined.

To Major-General Lincoln, July 1st 291
Instructions.

To the President of Congress, July 6th . . . 295
March of the army—Attempt upon Delancey's corps—Results gained—The service of the French.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, July 13th . . . 298
Favorable turn to the southward—A matter of importance to be communicated—Measures to augment his force—Chain of expresses.

To the Superintendent of Finance, July 13th . . 301
Subsisting the army—Meat and rum—Future supplies.

To Lord Stirling, July 14th 303
Instructions.

To Richard Henry Lee, July 15th 304
No change of sentiments towards him—His plan for relieving Virginia impracticable—Reasons against it—Results of his intended operations—State of the army—A moral supremacy essential.

Questions of Rochambeau and Washington's Replies, July 19th 307

To Brigadier-General Waterbury, July 21st . . 310
A movement to be made by the army—His directions and instructions.

To Thomas McKean, July 21st 314
Intercepted letters—His election as President of Congress—Foreign intelligence requested—Plentiful crops.

To John Parke Custis, July 25th 315
Alexander's propositions—Paper money and its depreciation—Few in Virginia joined the enemy—His reconnoitre.

To Major-General Greene, July 30th 318
Approval of his military conduct—Effects of his motions near New York—The condition of affairs in South Carolina.

PAGE

To the Marquis de Lafayette, July 30th . . . 321
His wish to be with main army—A possible change of operations—Moving the army to the south—Training and forming the militia—Importance of cavalry—Return of British from Virginia—His command—Intelligence for General Greene.

To the President of Congress, August 2d . . . 324
Army no stronger than when it moved from winter quarters—Measures taken to complete it—Little success attending the requisitions—The general return.

Circular Letter to States, August 2d 329

To the Superintendent of Finance, August 2d . . 330
Intended movements—Shipping at Philadelphia.

To the President of Congress, August 8th . . . 332
Exchange of Burgoyne—Exchange of full colonels by composition.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, August 15th . . 334
News of De Grasse—Position to be taken.

To the Count de Grasse, August 17th . . . 336
Change of intended operations—Army to move to the south—Contingencies that may arise and observations upon them—Vast importance of Charleston—Shipping.

To the Superintendent of Finance, August 17th . 341
Provisions—Vessels on the Delaware—One month's pay in specie for the army.

To Major-General Heath, August 19th . . . 343
Instructions.

To Robert Morris and Richard Peters, August 21st . 347
Scheme for reducing the army—Not expedient at present—Officers and recruits.

Circular Letter to the States, August 21st . . 352

To the Superintendent of Finance, August 27th . 353
Transportation of troops by water to the southward—Deposits of provisions—One month's pay in specie for the army.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, September 2d . . 356
Prospects for having enough men fair—Ordnance and provisions—The French fleets.

To the President of Congress, September 15th . . 359
Arrival at Williamsburg—Junction of the fleets—March of the army and supplies.

PAGE

To the Count de Grasse, September 15th . . . 361
Congratulations on his arrival and junction with Barras—Want of transports—Desires an interview.

To Major-General St. Clair, September 15th . . 362
Pennsylvania troops to be sent on.

Questions and Answers, September 17th . . . 364

To the Count de Grasse, September 25th . . . 367
Urges perseverance in the plan determined upon—The enterprise against York certain—To frustrate these prospects would involve disgrace and loss—Importance of having a fleet in the Chesapeake—An alternative scheme—The British admiral does not intend to fight.

To the President of Congress, October 1st . . 372
The armies before York—Outposts evacuated by the British and occupied by the Americans—Investment of the enemy practically complete.

To the Count de Grasse, October 1st . . . 373
Station of the French fleet—Some vessels needed above the enemy's posts on York River—Objects to be secured—James River secure—Little effect of land batteries—Fire ships.

To Major-General Greene, October 6th . . . 377
Commends his victory—The Marquis—Little differences of which the world will, he hopes, acquit him—Baron Steuben.

To Don Francisco Rendon, October 12th . . . 378
Disposition of Galvez—Cannot propose any operation—The prospects of carrying the war into South Carolina and Georgia—Best plan to move against East Florida.

To the President of Congress, October 12th . . 380
The first parallel opened—Subsequent operations—Ships and transports burned — Acknowledgments to the French—Greatest harmony exists between the two armies.

To the President of Congress, October 16th . . 382
The second parallel completed—Disposition for an assault—Success attending it—Importance of the positions captured and prospects—A sortie by the enemy.

To Lord Cornwallis, October 18th 384
General basis on which a capitulation must take place.

To the President of Congress, October 19th . . 386
Surrender of Cornwallis—Emulation of the whole army—The French army and fleet commended—Praise of individuals.

PAGE

To the Count de Grasse, October 20th . . . 389
Further co-operation again suggested—Charleston—For the French to terminate the war and dictate a peace—Wilmington an alternative—A reinforcement to be sent to Greene.

To David Ross, October 24th 392
Disposition to be made of slaves retaken from the enemy.

To the President of Congress, October 27th . . 393
Returns of captures at York and Gloucester—Disposition to be made of the troops—Reasons for his determination—Every arrangement should be made for an early campaign.

To the Count de Grasse, October 28th . . . 398
Outline for operations in May.

To Major-General St. Clair, October 29th . . . 400
Instructions.

To Major-General Lincoln, October 29th . . . 402
Instructions.

To the President of Congress, October 31st . . 403
Respecting General Duportail—Knox's claims to promotion.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, November 15th . . 405
Death of John Parke Custis—Testimony of his high regards—Future operations depend entirely upon a naval force—Congress to determine the land force.

To the President of Congress, November 15th . . 409
Has done only his duty—The hand of Heaven conspicuous in the result.

To Benjamin Dulany, November 17th . . . 410
The sale of Manley's tract—Reasons why he desires to purchase.

To George Plater and Thomas Cockey Dey, November 22d 415
Answer to an address of the General Assembly of Maryland.

To Governor Trumbull, November 28th . . . 416
Fears that a spirit of remissness may seize upon the States.

To James McHenry, December 11th 418
His entrance into civil life—To secure a good peace, we ought to be well prepared to carry on the war—No want of disposition in Congress—The States must determine future operations.

PAGE

To Major-General Greene, December 15th . . 419
Evacuation of North Carolina by the British—The recommendation of Colonel Williams—Possible action of the British in the southern States—Prisoners and retaliation.

To the President of Congress, December 27th . . 421
The Associated Loyalists in New York—Accounts of naval prisoners—Prospects of securing their release—Results of the want of system.

1782.

To Thomas Chittenden, January 1st 424
Sentiments as an individual—Claims of the Vermont people—A political manœuvre—Importance of the question—Coercion on the part of Congress to be dreaded—Negotiations with the enemy.

To the Marquis de Lafayette, January 4th . . 428
Efforts of Congress for a vigorous campaign—Money and naval assistance wanted of France—Intelligence—Resolutions of Virginia.

To Colonel Christian Febiger, January 12th . . 431
Refusal of the Virginia detachment to march—Impropriety of such a step—Independence not established—Measures of relief.

Circular Letter to the States, January 22d . . 433

Circular Letter to Some of the States, January 31st, 436

To Major-General Schuyler, February 6th . . 439
His letter to Stark—His ardent wish to conciliate all contention—Cannot recommend particular modes of accommodation—Vermont sends agents to Philadelphia.

To the Count de Rochambeau, February 9th . . 441
Reinforcement for Greene—Presentation of two field-pieces by Congress—Virginia's gratitude—Exchange of Lord Rawdon.

To the President of Congress, February 18th . . 443
Exchange of Laurens and Cornwallis—Proposition to exchange British soldiers for American seamen.

To Lieutenant-Colonel John Laurens, February 18th, 445
Another proof of Greene's singular abilities—Reinforcement from the French—Reported activity of the English.

PAGE

To the President of Congress, February 20th . . 447
Public and secret resolves on prisoners—The secret embarrasses him—Expense of supporting prisoners—Commissioners about to meet—Effect of the secret resolve—To retain Cornwallis would prevent a cartel.

To Major-General Heath, February 28th . . . 452
Clothing for the army—Contract of the Financier and measures to carry it into operation.

Circular Letter to the Eastern and Middle States, March 5th 454

To Brigadier-General William Irvine, March 8th . 455
Instructions.

To Brigadier-General Knox and Gouverneur Morris, March 11th 456
Instructions.

To James McHenry, March 12th 459
Never were vigorous measures more consonant to sound policy than at present—Ministers intent upon continuing the war—States may be blamed if the contest is prolonged—Voluntary enlistments impracticable—Classing the people makes every man a recruiting officer—Affairs in the West Indies.

To Major-General Greene, March 18th 462
Jealousy of partial treatment—No reinforcement from the French—An evacuation by the British of the southern States probable—Movement from New York.

To Brigadier-General Knox and Gouverneur Morris, March 28th 465
No persons from the enemy to be allowed to land—Reasons for declaring territory neutral—Goods for the use of their prisoners.

To Colonel Matthias Ogden, March 28th . . . 466
Instructions.

To the General Officers, April 15th 467
Inquiries upon future operations.

To John Lewis, April 17th 470
Disposal of lands in which he is interested—General description of the Carolina lands.

PAGE

To the General and Field Officers, April 19th . . 472
The case of Captain Joshua Huddy.

To Bartholomew Dandridge, April 20th . . . 473
Guardian for Custis' children—Reasons for his declining the office—Sends accounts with remarks—Power of individuals to recover debts in Virginia—Paper money.

To Sir Henry Clinton, April 21st 478
Demands that Lippincot be given up.

To Major-General Greene, April 23d 479
No detachment from New York probable—Progress of enlistments—Reinforcements must depend upon European intelligence —Must be content with confining the enemy to their lines and preventing ravages.

To the Secretary at War, April 27th 481
Suggests that the German prisoners be taken into the service —Should be recruited for the continent—Details and consequences.

To the Chevalier de La Luzerne, April 28th . . 483
Acknowledgments—Aid from the court of France—His present force—Opinion of militia—The southern army—Strength of the enemy—Distribution.

To the President of Congress, April 30th . . . 488
Commissioners report on exchange—Wishes instructions for future conduct—The pardon of refugees recommended.

Plan of Campaign, May 1st 490

THE WRITINGS OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

TO GOVERNOR REED.

HEAD QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
19 October, 1780.

SIR,

With respect to prisoners of War mentioned in your Excellency's Letter of the 3d. Inst., I beg leave to observe that it has been my wish from the beginning of the contest to the present day, that no distinction should exist with respect to them; that the whole should be considered on one general and liberal scale as belonging to the States, and not to this or that State; be exchanged according to their rank and the order of their captivity—and that all military prisoners taken from the Enemy, no matter where or by whom, should be deemed as belonging to the public at large, and be applied generally for the release of those in the Enemy's hands. This has been my wish, because it appeared to be just the only principle which could give general satisfaction. In conformity to it, all exchanges in the course of the War, resting solely with me and made by my directions, have been conducted; and it has been my constant direction, where the point depended wholly on me, that the prisoners with the Enemy were to be exchanged agreeable to it. Particular cases, how-

ever, may arise, where it may be proper to depart from the principle; but these can be but rare, and the principle, where the business was entirely with me, has never been deviated from in a single instance.

As to the case of Lt. Colo. Simcoe, and Lt. Colo. Conolly:—the former was captured by the Jersey Militia before the Resolution passed which you inclose; was confined by the State, who also made his exchange; the exchange of the latter was directly in consequence of a requisition by the State of Maryland, who claimed him to the Honble. the Board of War, who thought their claim was first. This State claimed it on the examples and practise of some other States in like cases, who had made exchanges without the interference or consulting any but their own authority.

When I received the Board's Letter upon the subject—I informed them, (tho I directed the exchange for the reasons I have mentioned and the considerations subjoined) "that previous to their letter I had supposed that *Citizens or Inhabitants* captured by the Enemy were the objects to whom the Act meant a preference should be given; and that *all officers* in captivity were to stand upon a common footing to be released on the principle of priority of capture." But as the terms of the Act were not entirely explicit, and the opinion of the Board was in favor of the claim, the sentiments I entertained of Lt. Colo. Ramsay's merit and indeed the recollection of the day of his capture, his conduct upon the occasion and the whole circumstances by which he was placed

in a situation that exposed him to more than a common risk of falling, or being taken, determined me not to oppose the measure. I have upon the present occasion attended minutely to the Act—and I am fully persuaded from a recurrence to some of my correspondence on the subject of it, long previous to its being passed, that my ideas of it were right, and that the construction and operation I supposed it should have, was the true one. The Draft of it I find was in my possession for consideration, so far back as the Summer '79, as a Regulation intended for placing the business of prisoners and their exchanges upon a different footing from what it then was; and I returned it with this observation, that the Regulations appeared judicious and proper—such as I had a long time wished to see take place; adding, that it appeared to be the intention to make a distinction between *prisoners* and *prisoners of War*, which was no doubt a proper and necessary one. Under the first I meant to comprehend Citizens and Civil Characters, not usually considered or made prisoners of exchange, but whom nevertheless the Enemy were seizing and taking whenever they could, in order to release their officers in our hands. Under the last, Officers and Soldiers of the Army or Militia actually taken in Arms. It was the practise of the States to exchange the former for military prisoners and particular officers out of the order of their captivity, for officers they had taken, that excited the clamor and dissatisfaction among the officers in general, who were prisoners. I think there should be no prefer-

ence under the idea of State captures, with respect to the exchanges of *Military* prisoners. The terms of the act seem to require it. I think it was the intention ; and if it should have a different operation it does not remove, at least but in a very remote and partial degree, the causes which were complained of, and which appear evidently on examination from the introduction to have been the mischiefs intended to be remedied ; but on the contrary it would sanction partial or State exchanges of officers, and only change the mode of carrying the business into execution by placing it in the hands of the Continental Commissary, instead of the Commissaries of the Individual States. And I am to observe further that the Resolution of Congress, by which I am authorized to go into exchanges now in contemplation to be carried into effect, points out and directs priority of capture as a governing principle.

I have been thus particular for your satisfaction.

* * * * * *

TO MAJOR LEE.

HEAD QUARTERS, 20 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

The plan proposed for taking A——,[1] the outlines of which are communicated in your letter which was this moment put into my hands without a date, has every mark of a good one. I therefore agree to the promised rewards, and have such entire confidence in your management of this business as to give it my fullest

[1] Arnold.

approbation ; and leave the whole to the guidance of your own judgment, with this express stipulation, and pointed injunction, that he, A——d, is brought to me alive. No circumstance whatever shall obtain my consent to his being put to death. The idea which would accompany such an event would be that Ruffians had been hired to assassinate him. My aim is to make a public example of him—and this should be strongly impressed upon those who are employed to bring him off. The sergeant must be very circumspect—too much zeal may create suspicion—and too much precipitancy may defeat the project. The most inviolable secrecy must be observed on all hands. I send you five guineas ; but I am not satisfied of the propriety of the sergeant's appearing with much specie—this circumstance may also lead to suspicion as it is but too well known to the enemy that we do not deal much in this article. The Interviews between the party in and out of the city, should be managed with much caution and seeming indifference, or else the frequency of their meetings &c., may betray the design and involve bad consequences. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 21 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I have recd. your favor of the 20th. The disposition you have made of the troops, at and near West Point, is agreeable to me. The two small Regiments, at present at King's Ferry, were purposely stationed

there, because they could not be brigaded with convenience. They are shortly to be reformed and incorporated, and therefore had best remain where they are untill that time. Genl. Greene had proposed to remove every superfluous store from those posts, so that, in case of necessity, they might be evacuated with little loss. He was of opinion, that the enemy, would if they came up seriously, run an armed Vessel or two above them, and render the removal of the stores by water impracticable. This seemed so probable a conjecture, that I desired him to strip them of all but very few Stores. You will be pleased to follow that method.

The Minister of France may soon be expected from the Eastward. Should he take you in his way, or should you hear certainly of his approach, be pleased to give me notice of it by Express. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR PASSAIC FALLS,
21 October, 1780.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favors of the 10th and 14th Instants—The advance of the British army towards the borders of North Carolina is an alarming circumstance, more especially as there is every reason to believe, that the force which lately sailed from New York is intended to coöperate with them.[1] The enemy, by several accounts, received a

[1] General Leslie sailed from New York on the 16th of October, with about three thousand troops. He was instructed to enter the Chesapeake and estab-

reinforcement from Europe in the last fleet. It is said by some to consist of two British regiments, about seven hundred German recruits, and some from Scotland. If so, this new accession is nearly equal to their late detachment ; but others again say the reinforcement consists wholly of recruits. I have heard nothing directly from the northward since my letter of the 16th. There are reports, that the enemy retired after destroying Fort Anne, Fort George, and burning some houses. It is thought and perhaps not without foundation, that this incursion was made upon a supposition, that Arnold's treachery had succeeded.[1]

Colonel Brodhead has in many of his late letters expressed his apprehension of the consequences, which may result from the want of provisions, should the enemy, agreeably to their threats, invest the post

lish a post on Elizabeth River, with the design of creating a diversion in favor of Lord Cornwallis' operations in North Carolina. General Leslie was to be under the command of Lord Cornwallis, and to act on James River towards the Roanoke, but not to pass this latter river without orders from his commander. Should Lord Cornwallis meet with serious opposition in crossing the Yadkin, it was recommended to General Leslie to move upon Cape Fear River, but this was left to his discretion. Should a post be established on the Chesapeake, it was Sir Henry Clinton's intention to reinforce it with more troops. "But while Washington remains in such force," said he, "and the French continue at Rhode Island, I do not think it advisable to weaken New York. If, however, he should send any detachments to the southward, I shall most likely do the same."—*MS. Letter from Sir Henry Clinton to Lord George Germaine*, November 10th.

[1] Early in October the British advanced upon Lake Champlain. October 10th, Fort Ann was invested and surrendered, and three days later Fort George capitulated. After destroying some property in Kings and Queensborough townships, they retired to Ticonderoga, where they remained until the 22d, when an advance towards St. John was begun, but suspended, probably because of the propositions for an exchange of prisoners made by Vermont. (See note to *Washington to Schuyler*, 14 May, 1781, *post*.

of Fort Pitt this winter. But by a letter from him of the 14th of September, matters had proceeded to such extremities, that the garrison, headed by the non-commissioned officers, had waited upon him, and he says in a decent manner remonstrated upon the hardship of having been without bread for five days. Upon being told that every thing would be done to relieve them, they retired in good order. Colonel Brodhead adds, that the country is not deficient in resources, but that public credit is exhausted, and will no longer procure supplies. Congress will therefore see the necessity of either furnishing the commissary to the westward with a competent sum of money, or of obtaining from the State of Pennsylvania an assurance, that the part of the quota of supplies demanded of her by the requisition of Congress of February last, and directed to be deposited in the magazines to the westward, which were intended for the support of Fort Pitt, shall be immediately laid in, if it has not been already done. The importance of that post to the whole western frontier is so great, as not to admit of its being left to any risk, if it can be avoided. * * *

Since I began this letter, I have received advices from Governor Clinton at Albany, who mentions that a party of the enemy, which came from the northward, had retired by the way of Lake George; but that another party from the westward had penetrated as far as Schoharie, which valuable settlement they had destroyed. The Governor himself was going to Schenectady to make a disposition of the

force in that quarter. I have sent up two Continental regiments to his assistance, which I hope will be sufficient to repel the enemy, as they are not represented as very numerous. Fort Schuyler is well garrisoned, and has forty days' provision in it. I therefore hope no great danger is to be apprehended from the present incursion.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

Congress having been pleased, by their resolution of the 5th instant, to authorize me to appoint an officer to the command of the southern army, in the room of Major-General Gates, till an inquiry can be had into his conduct as therein directed, I have thought proper to choose you for this purpose. You will, therefore, proceed without delay to the Southern army, now in North Carolina, and take the command accordingly. Uninformed as I am of the enemy's force in that quarter, of our own, or of the resources, which it will be in our power to command for carrying on the war, I can give you no particular instructions, but must leave you to govern yourself entirely according to your own pru-

[1] "I have recd. your favors of the 18th and 22d of September and 3d instant. I am obliged by the exertions, you had been making to throw a present supply of provisions into Fort Schuyler; and congratulate you upon your success against the party of savages, which opposed you in your march up. A company of artillery from Colonel Lamb's regiment is ordered to relieve Captain Brown's. Warner's regiment will be incorporated the 1st January. It will not, therefore, be worth while to remove it from its present station, as its time of existence will be so short. Spencer's will also undergo the same reform.

"I am not sufficiently acquainted with the situation of the country above, to give an opinion upon the propriety of evacuating Fort Schuyler, and establishing a post lower down. At any rate, this could not be done before the new post was in sufficient forwardness to receive the garrison immediately upon the evacuation of the old; and this, I take it, under our present circumstances,

dence and judgment, and the circumstances in which you find yourself. I am aware, that the nature of the command will offer you embarrassments of a singular and complicated nature ; but I rely upon your abilities and exertions for every thing your means will enable you to effect. I give you a letter to the Honorable the Congress, informing them of your appointment, and requesting them to give you such powers and such support, as your situation and the good of the service demand. You will take their orders in your way to the Southward.

I also propose to them to send the Baron de Steuben to the Southward with you. His talents, knowledge of service, zeal, and activity will make him very useful to you in all respects, and particularly in the formation and regulation of the raw troops, who will principally compose the Southern army. You will give him a command suited to his rank, besides employing him as Inspector-General. If Congress approve it, he will take your orders at Philadelphia. I have put Major Lee's corps under marching orders, and, as soon as he is ready, shall detach him to join you.

As it is necessary, the inquiry into the conduct of Major-General Gates should be conducted in the quarter in which he has acted, where all the witnesses are, and where alone the requisite information can be obtained, I have to desire, as soon as the situation of affairs will possibly permit, you will nominate a Court of Inquiry to examine into this case, agreeably to the aforementioned resolution of Congress. Major-General the Baron de Steu-

would be a work of considerable time. It is a matter, which will much depend upon the prevailing sentiment in the State, which is more immediately interested in the measure ; and, as you have mentioned your opinion upon the subject to His Excellency the Governor, he will, I imagine, take the necessary steps to have the measure adopted, should it be deemed eligible."—*Washington to Colonel William Malcolm*, 16 October, 1780.

On the 28th of October, Brigadier-General James Clinton was placed in command of Albany, and instructed as follows :

"You will be particularly attentive to the post of Fort Schuyler, and do every thing in your power to have it supplied with a good stock of provision and stores ; and you will take every other precaution, which the means at your command will permit, for the security of the frontier, giving me the most early advice of any incursions of the enemy."

ben will preside at this Court, and the members will consist of such General and field officers of the Continental troops, as were not present at the battle of Camden, or, being present, are not wanted as witnesses, or are persons to whom Major-General Gates has no objection. I wish this affair to be conducted with the greatest impartiality, and with as much despatch as circumstances will permit. You will, on your arrival at the army, take the sense in writing of the General Officers and other principal officers, concerning the practicability of an immediate inquiry. If they judge it practicable, on the principles of these instructions, you will have it carried into execution. If they do not think it can take place immediately, you will inform General Gates of it, and transmit to me their determination; and you will from time to time pursue the same mode, that any delay which may happen may appear, as I am persuaded it will really be, unavoidable. The Court need not consist of more than five, nor must it consist of less than three members; and in all cases there must be three general officers. Should General Gates have any objection to the mode of inquiry, which he wishes to make to Congress or to me, you will suspend proceeding in the affair, till he transmits his objection, and you receive further orders. You will keep me constantly advised of the state of your affairs, and of every material occurrence. My warmest wishes for your success, reputation, health, and happiness accompany you. Given at Head Quarters Preakness, October 22d, 1780.[1]

[1] "I beg leave to mention General Greene, upon this occasion, to Congress as an Officer in whose abilities, fortitude and integrity, from a long and intimate experience of them, I have the most entire confidence.—In the command he is going into he will have every disadvantage to struggle with. The confidence and support of Congress, which it will be his ambition to merit, will be essential to his success. The defect of military resources in the Southern department—the confusion in which the affairs of it must for some time be, require that the Commanding Officer should be vested with extensive powers. I dare say Congress will take their measures in a manner suited to the exigency. —General Greene waits upon them for their orders.—

"As, in a great measure, a new Army is to be formed to the Southward, the presence of the Baron de Steuben will in my opinion be of more essential utility in that quarter than here, where through the ensuing Campaign, we shall have the greatest part of our force raw Recruits, yet as we are organized and in

TO GEORGE MASON.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
22 October, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

In consequence of a resolve of Congress directing an enquiry into the conduct of General Gates, and authorizing me to appoint some other officer in his place during the enquiry, I have made choice of Major-General Greene who will, I expect, have the honor of presenting you with this letter.

I can venture to introduce this Gentleman to you as a man of abilities, bravery and coolness. He has a comprehensive knowledge of our affairs, and is a man of fortitude and resources. I have not the smallest doubt therefore of his employing all the means

some order, the sub-inspectors will suffice for the purposes of the department. I therefore submit to Congress the propriety of sending the Baron de Steuben to the Southern Army. The sooner they are pleased to announce their pleasure on this head the better."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 22 October, 1780. To Steuben Washington wrote on the same day:

"Though I am sensible how important your services will be in this quarter, yet, as to the Southward there is an army to be created, the mass of which is at present without any formation at all, your services there will be still more essential; and, as I am persuaded that your inclination is to be wherever you can be most useful, I have recommended it to Congress to send you with General Greene to the Southern army. If Congress approve, you will take his orders and proceed as speedily as possible. I wish you may have been able previously to obtain a satisfactory establishment of your department, which, in your absence, will become more necessary than it has been heretofore. But, if it is not done, I would not have it detain you."

Congress by a formal resolve approved the appointment of Major-General Greene, and invested him with all the powers formerly conferred on General Gates, and the additional one of negotiating an exchange of prisoners. His command included all the regular troops raised at the south, from the State of Delaware to Georgia inclusive.—*Journals*, October 30th.

Col. Charles Harrison was ordered to go with Greene to take command of he artillery.

[1] A similar letter was written to Archibald Cary, Edmund Pendleton, Benjamin Harrison, and Barthw. Dandridge.

which may be put into his hands to the best advantage—nor of his assisting in pointing out the most likely ones to answer the purposes of his command. With this character, I take the liberty of recommending him to your civilities and support, for I have no doubt, from the embarrassed situation of Southern affairs, of his standing much in need of the latter from every gentleman of influence in the Assemblies of those States.

As General Greene can give you the most perfect information in detail of our present distresses, and future prospects, I shall content myself with giving the aggregate account of them. And with respect to the first, they are so great and complicated, that it is scarcely within the powers of description to give an adequate idea of them—with regard to the second, unless there is a material change both in our military and civil policy, it will be in vain to contend much longer.

We are without money, and have been so for a great length of time; without provision and forage, except what is taken by impress; without cloathing, and shortly shall be (in a manner) without men. In a word we have lived upon expedients till we can live no longer, and it may truly be said that the history of this war, is a history of false hopes and temporary devices, instead of system, and œconomy which results from it.

If we mean to continue our struggles, (and it is to by hoped we shall not relinquish our claims) we must do it upon an entire new plan. We must have a permanent force, not a force that is constantly fluctuat-

ing and sliding from under us as a pedestal of ice would do from a statue in a summer's day, involving us in expence that baffles all calculation—an expence which no funds are equal to.— We must at the same time contrive ways and means to aid our Taxes by Loans, and put our finances upon a more certain and stable footing than they are at present. Our civil government must likewise undergo a reform—ample powers must be lodged in Congress as the head of the Federal union, adequate to all the purposes of war. Unless these things are done, our efforts will be in vain, and only serve to accumulate expence, add to our perplexities, and dissatisfy the people without a prospect of obtaining the prize in view. But these sentiments do not appear well in a hasty letter, without digestion or order. I have not time to give them otherwise,—and shall only assure you that they are well meant, however crude they may appear. With sincere affection, &c.[1]

[1] "I hope the Assemblies that are now sitting, or are about to sit, will not rise till they put three things in a fair & proper train.

"First, to give full & complete powers to Congress competent to all purposes of war.

"Secondly, by Loans & Taxes, to put our finances on a more respectable footing than they are at present, and

"Thirdly, that they will endeavor to establish a permanent force—These things will secure our Independency beyond dispute—but to go on in our present system—Civil as well as military—is an useless and vain attempt—It is idle to suppose that raw and undisciplined Men, are fit to oppose regular Troops—and if they were, our present Military System is too expensive for any fund except that of an Eastern Nabob—and in the Civil line, instead of one head and director, we have, or soon will have, thirteen, which is as much a monster in politicks as it would be in the human form—Our prest. distresses, and future prospects of distress, arising from these and similar causes, is great, beyond the powers of description, and without a change must end in our ruin." —*Washington to William Fitzhugh*, 22 October, 1780.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PREAKNESS,
22 October, 1780.

SIR,

I enclose you a resolution of Congress of the 5th instant, directing me to order a court of inquiry to be held on your conduct, as commander of the southern army, and to appoint an officer to command that army in your room, until such inquiry be made. In obedience to this order, I have appointed Major-General Greene to the command; and I have instructed him respecting the inquiry, in the manner which the enclosed extract from his instructions will show. It appeared to me, that the business could be nowhere so properly conducted as with the army, where the transactions, which will enter into the inquiry, took place, and where every kind of light can with the most facility be obtained. I could not, however, order it immediately to commence, because it is possible, that the situation of affairs might render it impracticable; but I have endeavored to take every precaution to prevent delay, if it is not unavoidable. Should you have any objection to the mode proposed, I shall be obliged to you to communicate it to me, with your reasons; in the fullest assurance, that it is my aim to execute the orders of Congress in the manner most consistent with justice to the public and to you. In this case, General Greene will suspend proceeding, till I receive your objections, and send him further instructions. I am, &c.[1]

[1] When General Greene joined the southern army, it was General Gates' wish that the court of inquiry might be immediately convened. "It is true,"

TO THE BOARD OF WAR.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 25 October, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

I am honored with your letter of the 18th. The enemy seem to be practising the arts of corruption so extensively, that I think we cannot be too much upon our guard against its effects, nor ought we to neglect any clues that may lead to discoveries; but, on the other hand, we ought to be equally circumspect in admitting suspicions or proceeding upon them without sufficient evidence. It will be the policy of the enemy to distract us, as much as possible, by sowing jealousies, and, if we swallow the bait, no characters will be safe. There will be nothing but mutual distrust. In the present case, from every thing I have heard of your informant, I should suspect him of the worst intentions; and, notwithstanding what we are told about the motives, which obliged him to leave the enemy, I still think it probable he came out as a spy, and that the assigned causes are either altogether fictitious, or, being real, were made the inducement with him for undertaking the errand to avoid punishment, as well as obtain a reward. The kind of information he is willing to give may be

said he, "there are some evidences I could wish were here, that cannot at present be procured; but innocence and integrity induce me to be confident, that the honor and justice of the court of inquiry will make every allowance for that deficiency." A council of general officers decided, however, that in the state of the army at that time it was not practicable for a court to be summoned. It would interfere with important operations, and render it necessary to call Baron Steuben from Virginia, where his services were essential. The time of assembling the court was accordingly deferred, and General Gates retired to his residence in the county of Berkeley in Virginia.

received; but in my opinion it would be a very improper foundation for an inquiry, unless the circumstances of it have much more weight than the character of the witness. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 30 October, 1780.

It is impossible, my dear Marquis, to desire more ardently than I do to terminate the campaign by some happy stroke; but we must consult our means rather than our wishes, and not endeavor to better our affairs by attempting things, which for want of success may make them worse. We are to lament, that there has been a misapprehension of our circumstances in Europe; but, to endeavor to recover our reputation, we should take care that we do not injure it more. Ever since it became evident, that the allied arms could not co-operate this campaign, I have had an eye to the point you mention, determined, if a favorable opening should offer, to embrace it; but, so far as my information goes, the enterprise would not be warranted. It would in my opinion be imprudent to throw an army of ten thousand men upon an island against nine thousand, exclusive of seamen and militia. This, from the accounts we have, appears to be the enemy's force. All we can therefore at present do, is to endeavor to gain a more certain knowledge of their situation and act accordingly. This I have been some time employed in doing, but hitherto with little success. I shall thank you for any aids

you can afford. Arnold's flight seems to have frightened all my intelligencers out of their senses. I am sincerely and affectionately yours.[1]

TO ABNER NASH, GOVERNOR OF NORTH CAROLINA.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
6 November, 1780.

SIR,

I had the honor yesterday to receive your Excellency's letter of the 6th of October, and am extremely obliged to you for the intelligence contained in it. It is of so great importance, that the earliest and best intelligence of all the great movements and designs of the enemy, as well as of the situation of our own affairs, should be obtained, that I must entreat you will be so good as to favor me with such communications, as may have any influence on our military arrangements and operations.

While I sincerely lament the distressed and exhausted situation of the southern States, I cannot but hope the enemy have committed themselves so far as to be made to repent their temerity; especially since I have received information, of a more recent date than your letter, of the success of the militia against Colo-

[1] The Marquis de Lafayette, being now in command of the six battalions of light infantry, stationed in advance of the main army, was extremely anxious to effect some important enterprise before the campaign should be brought to a close. A descent upon Staten Island had been projected, which was to be conducted by him; but it was rendered impracticable by the want of boats and of other necessary preparations. He had written a letter to General Washington, to which the above was a reply, urging, for various political reasons, an attack upon the upper part of New York Island.

nel Ferguson. This I flatter myself will give a better aspect to your affairs, and will awaken more extensively that spirit of bravery and enterprise, which displayed itself so conspicuously on the occasion.

The enemy seem again to have adopted the same system of policy they have before presented with but too much success, of making detachments to the southward at a time when our army is greatly reduced by the expiration of the services of the levies, who were raised for the campaign only. Besides the detachment under General Leslie, which has landed in Virginia, it is reported another embarkation is taking place at N. York. But I have great confidence in the exertion of the southern States, when their all is at stake, and in the abilities of General Greene to call forth and apply the resources of the country in the best and most effectual manner to its defence. Major-General the Baron Steuben, who accompanies him, possesses the most distinguished military talents, and has rendered signal service to this army as inspector-general. Major Lee has also marched to join the southern army with his legion. The arrival of a reinforcement in New York, nearly equal to the late detachment, and the incursion of a large force (of which I have just received intelligence), from Canada on the northern and western frontiers of the State of New York, where great devastation has already been committed, will I fear render it impossible to make any further detachments from this army to the southward. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO ROBERT CARTER NICHOLAS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
7 November, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I am perswaded that the letters, of which the inclosed are copies, never reached your hands. I take the liberty of forwarding a duplicate of the last and triplicate of the first—with the inclosures it refers to.

Since mine of March to you, I have been favored with a third letter from our good friend Colonel Fairfax, copy of which I also send, and should be happy in knowing that you had accepted the appointment he mentions, in order that I might direct all his Papers to be carefully packed up and sent to you.

I hope, I trust, that no act of Legislation in the State of Virginia has affected, or can affect, the property of this gentleman, otherwise than in common with that of every good and well disposed citizen of America. It is a well known fact that his departure for England was not only antecedent to the present rupture with Great Britain, but before there was the most distant prospect of a serious dispute with that country, and if it is necessary to adduce proof of his attachment to the interests of America since his residence there, and of the aid he has given to many of our distressed countrymen in that kingdom, abundant instances may be produced, not only by the Gentlemen alluded to in his letter of December 5, 1779, but by others that are known to me, and on whom justice to Col. Fairfax will make it necessary to call, if occasion should require the facts to be ascertained.

About the time of my writing to you in March last,

I communicated the contents of Col. Fairfax's letter of the 3d of August, 1778, to Col. Lewis, and received for an answer, that the bad state of his health would render it impossible for him to discharge the trust Col. Fairfax wished to repose in you, or him, in a manner agreeable to himself, and therefore could not think of engaging in it if you (to whom I informed him I had written) should decline it; but he recommended in case of your refusal, Mr. Francis Whiting (the former manager of Cols. Henry and William Fitzhugh's Estate) as a person most likely, in his opinion, to discharge the trust with punctuality.

My best respects attend your lady & family, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 7 November, 1780.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of 1st and am happy to find that my appointment of Major-General Greene to the command of the Southern Army meets the approbation of Congress. * * * By letters from Governor Clinton I find, that the enemy have gone off for the present from the Mohawk River, after totally destroying the Country as low down as Schoharie. Those upon the Northern quarter had repassed Lake George, and were again proceeding towards St. John's, but suddenly returned with a reinforcement, and were, by accounts from Genl. Schuyler of the 1st instt., assembled in so considerable force at Ticonderoga, that I have

thought proper to send up the remainder of the New York Brigade from West Point to Albany, that they may be ready to act as circumstances may require. The destruction of the Grain upon the Western Frontier of the State of New York is likely to be attended with the most alarming consequences, in respect to the formation of Magazines upon the North River. We had prospects of establishing a very considerable Magazine of Flour in that quarter, previous to the late incursion. The settlement of Schoharie only would have delivered eighty thousand Bushels of Grain, but that fine district is now totally destroyed. I should view this calamity with less concern, did I see the least prospect of obtaining the necessary supplies of flour from the States of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, previous to the interruption of transportation by frost and bad roads. * * *

While our Army is experiencing almost daily want, that of the enemy at New York is deriving ample supplies from a trade with the adjacent States of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, which has by degrees become so common, that it is hardly thought a Crime. It is true there are, in those States, Laws imposing a penalty upon this criminal commerce; but it is either so light or so little attended to, that it does not prevent the practice. The Marketts of New York are so well supplied, that a great number of mouths, which would otherwise be fed from the public Magazines, are now supported upon the fresh Meats and flour of the Country, by which

means the enemy have been often enabled to bear the disappointments of the arrival of their provision Fleets without much inconvenience; and, if report be true, they would at this very time experience distress for want of their long expected Irish Fleet, if the resources of the Country were effectually cut off from them. This cannot be done by military measures alone, except in cases of Blockade or Seige, and much less will it be in my power to do it with our Army in the weak state it is verging to. I believe that most nations make it capital for their subjects to furnish their enemies with provisions and Military Stores during the War.—Was this done by the several States, and the laws rigidly put in execution in a few instances, the practice would be stopped. Without something of the kind, the enemy will, while they have a species of money of superior value to ours, find little difficulty of making up the losses, which they every now and then meet with at sea, and which would very much embarrass their operations, had they no immediate mode of making good the deficiency.

I have the pleasure to inform Congress, that, at the late meeting of the respective Commissaries, the exchanges of about one hundred and forty of our officers, and all our privates in New York, amounting to four hundred and seventy-six, were effected. Among the former are Major-General Lincoln,[1] Brigr.-Generals

[1] "I have now the pleasure to congratulate you upon your exchange. . . . I do not mean by this notice to hasten your return to the Army; for that, alas! is upon the eve of its annual dissolution; consequently of the enemy's advantages.

Thompson, Waterbury, and Duportail, and Lt.-Colo. Laurens. Sir Henry Clinton having made a proposal of exchanging a further number of the Convention Officers, without attaching men to them, I have acceded to it, by which we shall liberate all our officers in this quarter, except one brigr.-general (Irvine), Nine Colonels, one Captain, and thirty-nine Lieutenants. An offer is made by Sir Henry Clinton to exchange all those, for a division of the Convention Troops, by Composition where Rank will not apply. To this I have refused to accede, unless Lieutt.-General Burgoyne is taken into the account. If they will agree to this, he alone will liberate nearly the whole of them. They have further proposed a general exchange of the Convention Troops, Officers and men, for our prisoners of War at the Southward. I have not thought proper to enter at all upon the business of southern prisoners, because I have but a very imperfect state of them, and because I perceive by the powers granted to Major-General Greene, that he is at Liberty to negotiate the exchange of prisoners in that quarter. * * *

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

I am of opinion, that your influence and exertion in procuring the State's quota of Troops for the war, providing funds for the subsistence of them, Magazines, &c., will be of infinitely more importance in your own State this Winter, than it can be to become a mere spectator, or fellow sufferer of the hunger and cold, from scantiness of Provision and Cloathing, which I expect the small remains of our army will have to encounter in a very short time, and more than probably to contend with during the winter. But at the same time I give this as an opinion; and I leave you at full liberty to pursue the bent of your inclination and judgment."— *Washington to Major-General Lincoln*, 8 November, 1780.

[1] Read in Congress, November 13th. Referred to Duane, Henry, and Cornell.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR PASSAIC FALLS,
8 November, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

I am favored with your letter of the 31st of October, and am glad to find your Appointment so agreeable to the views and wishes of Congress. So fully sensible have I long been of the distressed situation of the army, not only in this quarter, but also to the Southward, and of all our great Departments, from the embarrassed *state* of our *finances*, that it has been not only a constant subject of representation in the strongest terms to Congress and to the States individually, but particularly so to the Minister of France at our last interview; and that a foreign Loan was absolutely necessary to retrieve our affairs. My ideas therefore must have been exceedingly misapprehended by him, or his by the Baron Steuben.

I entirely approve of your Plan for forming a flying Army. And in addition to this, (if the Enemy should continue to harass those parts of Virginia, which are intersected with large navigable Rivers,) I would recommend the building a number of flat-bottomed Boats, of as large a construction as can be conveniently transported on Carriages. This I conceive might be of great utility, by furnishing the means to take advantage of the enemy's situation by crossing those Rivers, which would otherwise be impassable. I have also written to Governor Jefferson on the Subject. If a spirit of Patriotism, or even a true policy, animates the merchants and Men of Property in the Southern States, a subscription may be attended with

success; at least the experiment can do no injury. General Knox has received directions to send forward the Compy. of Artillery. An order will be given for the thousand stand of Arms. Since writing the above I have received your favor of the 3d Inst.

Lieutenant-Col. Laurens will have heard of his exchange before this time, and is at liberty to go to the Southward if he thinks proper. With respect to the power Congress have invested you with, to make exchanges, I should suppose it regarded the Prisoners taken in the Southern Department on the usual principles, without involving the Convention or any other Troops to the Northward. A pretty extensive exchange has just taken place in this quarter. It is impossible, from the non-arrival of the French Arms, and the scarcity in the Eastern States, to furnish those requested by you. Nor do I think the Legion of the Duke de Lauzun can be detached from the French army. The fleet of Arbuthnot, which still blockades that of France in the harbor of Newport, effectually precludes the execution of the other plan. Our last advices from the Northward mentioned another incursion of the Enemy from Canada in greater force; in consequence of which the remainder of the York Brigade is ordered thither. There are reports, that an embarkation is about to be made at New York; but the accounts are vague and contradictory, and the fact not yet ascertained. I have to request you will be pleased to send by a flag of truce the enclosed Letter to Brigadier-Genl. Duportail, who is exchanged. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO WILLIAM FITZHUGH.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
8 November, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

* * * The favorable prospect, which at one stage of the campaign was held up to view, has vanished like the morning dew, leaving scarce a trace behind it, but the recollection of past distresses on the score of Provisions, the want of which continues to threaten us.

Our accounts from the Southward are vague and uncertain, but agreeable. If it be true that a body of French and Spanish Troops have landed in South Carolina, it may aid in the total destruction of Cornwallis' Army. Another Embarkation is talked of at New York—but this also is a matter suggestion—not certainly as to numbers.

It is devoutly to be wished that the late resolves of Congress for regulating the Army and completing the Regiments for the War may receive all the energetic force of the respective States. Certain I am that if this measure had been adopted four, or even three years ago, that we might, at this time, have been sitting under our vines and fig-trees in full enjoyment of Peace and Independence. To attain which, the delay of the measure is unfortunate, it does not make it too late, but more necessary to enter upon it vigorously at this late hour.

An Army for the war, proper magazines, and sufficient powers in Congress for all purposes *of war* will soon put an end to it—but the expensive and ruinous system we were pursuing was more than the friends

of any Nation upon Earth would bear, and served to increase the hopes of the enemy in proportion as the minds of our people were depressed, by a boundless prospect of expence, which was increasing as it rolled on like a snow ball. * * *

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
8 November, 1780.

SIR,

I have been honored with Your Excellency's favors of the 22d, 25th, and 26th ulto. We have already had reports, that the enemy left Portsmouth precipitately a few days after landing. I shall be happy to hear it confirmed, as well as the cause to which their hurry is attributed, that of the appearance of a French or Spanish fleet upon the coast of Carolina. Should the account be premature, and should they establish a post in Virginia, I think it will be good policy to remove the troops of convention to a greater distance from them. General Phillips has applied for passports for a flag-vessel to proceed to James River as heretofore, with clothing and other necessaries for those troops. This will be granted; and, should they be removed from Charlottesville, your Excellency will be pleased, upon the arrival of the vessel in James River, to give directions for her to proceed to the most convenient place of debarkation, relatively to where the troops may be.

I am glad to hear that you have permitted Governor Hamilton and Major Hayes to go to New

York; while they remain there upon parole, they will be less capable of concerting mischief than in Virginia, and it will deprive the enemy of a pretext for complaining that they are treated with rigor. Another embarkation is said to be preparing at New York, and I think it a very probable circumstance, considering the situation of the enemy's affairs in South Carolina and ours in this quarter. They are well acquainted with the expiration of the times of the better half of our army the latter end of December, and they know they may safely detach equal to the number we disband, from this time to the month of May or June next, which is as soon as we generally get our recruits into the field. Should the enemy continue in the lower parts of Virginia, they will have every advantage by being able to move up and down the rivers in small parties, while it will be out of our power to molest them for want of the means of suddenly transporting ourselves across those rivers to come at them. This might be in a very great degree obviated, and they kept in check, if we had a number of (say) flat-boats upon travelling carriages attending the army collected to watch their motions. We could then move across from river to river with more rapidity than they could go down one and up another, and none of their detachments would be ever secure by having the water between them and us. Major-General Greene is perfectly acquainted with the kind of boats I have mentioned, and with the mode of fixing them. He will give the proper directions for having them constructed, should your

Excellency approve the plan. Newcastle I think from its situation would be a good and safe place to build the boats. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

[PRIVATE.]

HEAD-QUARTERS, 16 November, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your forage will be made to subserve a project I have in view, the success of which depending upon a concurrence of things and upon causes that are unalterable. I have to request, that matters may be so ordered by you, as that the detachment employed on this occasion may be at White Plains, or as low down as you mean they shall go, by two o'clock on Thursday the 23d instant. They will remain there that night upon their arms; and, as it is not unlikely that the enemy, (if they are in force at Kingsbridge,) may attempt to surprise them, a vigilant lookout is to be kept, and small parties of Horse and foot employed in patrolling the different Roads leading from the Enemy's lines.

It is my earnest wish, that you make your foraging party as strong, and have it as well officered, as possible. I am of opinion, that you may trust the several works (as it will be for a few days *only*, and this body will be in advance of them) to the Invalids, and to such Troops as are rendered unfit for the field on acct. of cloathing. The guard-boats should, upon this occasion, be uncommonly alert. They should proceed as low down as they can with safety, and so

dispose of themselves as by signals to communicate the quickest intelligence of any movements on the River. A chain of expresses may also be fixed between the foragers and yr. Quarters, for the purpose of speedy information of any extra event or occurrence below.

It is unnecessary to be more explicit. Your own judgment and conviction of the precision, with which this business, especially in point of time, should be executed, will supply any omission of mine. This, that is the time of being at the White Plains in force, under the *appearance* of a large forage, if you cannot make it real, is the first object to be attended to. I dare not commit my project to writing, for fear of a miscarriage of my letter; but it is more than probable, that between this and the day of execution I shall send an officer to you with a detailed acct. of it.[1] * * * So soon as this comes to hand, I beg of you to send by water five Boats of the largest size that can be conveniently transported on Carriages to the Slote above Dobbs's Ferry, where I will have them met by carriages. Let there be five good watermen from the Jersey line, if they have them, allotted (with their arms and accoutrements) to each boat, under the care of an active, intelligent Subaltern, who is also a good Waterman. If there should be any Armed

[1] This project was an attack on the posts in the northern part of New York Island. The foraging party was intended to operate as a feint, and to divert the attention of the enemy in another direction at the time of the attack. General Stark commanded the detachment, consisting of two thousand five hundred men, destined for this object. He left West Point on the 21st, and marched to White Plains.—*Heath's Memoirs*, p. 264.

Vessels in the River above Dobbs's Ferry let me know it, that I may order the Carriages to King's Ferry. The officer and men are to attend the boats by land as well as by water. * * *

TO JOHN SULLIVAN, IN CONGRESS.[1]

HD.-QRS., PASSAIC FALLS, 20 November, 1780.

DR. SIR,

You have obliged me very much by your friendly letter of the 12th, and I can assure you that I shall be very happy in a continuation of them. You are too well acquainted with my course of business to expect frequent or long letters from me, but I can truly say that I shall write to none with more pleasure, when it is in my power to write at all, than I will do to you. The determination of Congress to raise an army for the war, and the honorable establishment on which the officers are placed, will, I am persuaded, be productive of much good. Had the first measure been adopted four, or even three years ago, I have not the smallest doubt in my mind but that we should at this day have been sitting under our own vines and fig-trees in the full enjoyment of Peace and Independence; and I have as little doubt, that the value which I trust officers will now set upon their commissions will prove the surest basis of public œconomy. 'T was idle to expect, that men who were suffering every

[1] General Sullivan, having resigned his commission in the army, and been appointed a delegate to Congress from New Hampshire, took his seat in that body on the 11th of September.

species of present distress, with the prospect of inevitable ruin before them, could bear to have the cord of discipline strained to its proper tune; and where that is not the case, it is no difficult matter to form an idea of the want of order, or to convince military men of its consequent evils.

It is to be lamented, that the call upon the States for specific supplies should come at this late hour, because it is much to be feared that, before those at a distance can be furnished with the resolves and make their arrangements, the season for Salting Provision will be irretrievably lost: and this leads me to a remark, which I could wish never to make, and which is, that the multiplicity of business, in which Congress are engaged, will not let them extend that seasonable and provident care to many matters, which private convenience and public œconomy indispensably call for, and proves, in my opinion, the evident necessity of committing more of the executive business to small boards or responsible characters, than is practised at present; for I am very well convinced, that, for want of system in the execution of business, and a proper timing of things, that our public expenditures are inconceivably greater than they ought to be.

Many instances might be given in proof, but I will confine myself to the article of cloathing, as we are *feelingly* reminded of it. This, instead of being ready in the Fall for delivery, is then to be provided, or to be drawn from the Lord knows whither; and, after forcing many Soldiers from the field for want of it, is eked out at different periods, as it can be had

through ye winter, till spring, and in such a piecemeal way, that the Soldr. derivg. little comfort from it, is hurt both in appearance and pride, while the recruiting Service is greatly injured by it. Were this the result of necessity, not a word would be said; but it is the effect of a dividd. attentn., or overmuch business; for, at the periods of the extreme suffering of the army, we can hear of cloathing in different places falling a prey to moths, and canker-worms of a worse kind; and I am much mistaken, too, if the cloathing system (if ours can be called a system) does not afford a fruitful field for stockjobbing, &c.

It may be asked what remedy I would apply to these evils? In my opinion there is a plain and easy one. It will not, I acknowledge, give relief to our immediate and pressing wants, no more than order can succeed confusion in a moment; but, as both must have a beginning, let Congress without delay (for this is the season to be lookg. forwd. to the supplies for another year) employ some eminent merchant of approved integrity and abilities, to import, (in his own way,) materials for the annual cloathing of officers and men, agreeably to estimates to be furnished by the Cloathier-General. Or, if *they* prefer it, let these imports be made by a committee of their own body. When a stock is once obtained, discontinue all Continental agents and State agents for Continental purposes, and confine the business of cloathing the army wholly to the Importer, Clothier-Genl., and regimental cloathiers. This would be easy and simple, and would soon extricate that department

from those embarrassments and impositions, which have a tendency to distress individuals and load the public with an enormous expense. At present we do not know where or to whom to apply. I have made the distresses of the army known to Congress, the Board of War, and the States individually, without learning from whence the supplies are to come, and can without the aid of a perspective see a very gloomy prospect before us this Winter on the score of cloathing.

I have two reasons for preferring the materials for cloathing to ready made cloathes; first, because I think we can have them made by the regimental Taylors to fit each man, and to suit the fashion of each Regimt.; and, secondly, because the materials will always be a more ready sale, if Peace takes place and the Troops are disbanded, than ready-made cloathes. They wd. attract less notice, too, at the places of Export. Another question may arise here; Where are the means? Means must be found, or the Soldiers must go naked. But I will take the liberty in this place to give it as my opinion, that a foreign loan is indispensably necessary to the continuance of the war. Congress will deceive themselves, if they imagine that the army, or a State that is the theatre of war, can rub through a second campaign as the last. It would be as unreasonable as to suppose, that, because a man had rolled a snow-ball till it had acquired the size of a horse, that he might do so till it was as large as a house. Matters may be pushed to a certain point, beyond which we cannot

move them. Ten months' pay is now due to the army. Every departmt. of it is so much indebted, that we have not credit for a single Express; and some of the States are harassed and oppressed to a degree beyond bearing. To depend, under these circumstances, upon the resources of the Country, unassisted by foreign loans, will, I am confident, be to lean on a broken Reed.

The situation of the southern States is very embarrassing, and I wish it were in my power to afford them relief in the way you have mentioned, but it is not. The very measure *you* suggest, *I* urged as far as decency and policy would permit me to do at the Interview at Hartford, but to no effect.[1] I cannot be more particular on this subject, and what I now say is in confidence.

The report of Sir Henry Clinton's going to the southward was groundless, and I believe few Troops have left New York since those under Leslie. I set out with telling you that I could not write long letters, but have ended with a flat contradiction of it. I am, with much esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.[2]

[1] General Sullivan had suggested the expediency of ordering the French fleet from Newport to Boston, where it might remain secure till reinforced, and of calling the French troops to head-quarters. Such an arrangement would excite Sir Henry Clinton's fears for the safety of New York, and prevent his sending detachments to the southern States. This measure was pressed upon the French officers at the conference in Hartford, and it would seem to have been the best that could be adopted, for the troops, who were detached from New York during the winter, constituted an essential part of the British southern army.

[2] On the 21st of November Washington had matured his plans for an attack upon New York, and began to issue the orders necessary to effect it. Colonel Gouvion was directed to reconnoitre the enemy's works from Fort Washington

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 20 November, 1780.

SIR,

I am authorized by Congress to propose a meeting of commissioners, for the purpose of effecting an exchange of all Continental prisoners of war now in your possession, and of the hostages given in Canada, as well as of all officers on parole, and officers violators of parole, and militia actually taken in arms and remaining prisoners of war, for an equal number of the convention troops, and other prisoners in our hands, rank for rank; and, where similar rank will not apply,

upwards, and make every observation essential for forming a plan for surprising them by a night attack. (21 November.) Moylan was ordered to parade his regiment at Totawa Bridge, at nine o'clock on the morning of the 24th, detaching parties to secure all the crossing-places on the Hackensack River, and preventing any person from going with intelligence to the enemy. Major Goetschius was to patrol from the New Bridge downwards, for the same purpose. (21 November.) Brigadier-General Wayne was to march on the same day to a mile below Acquaquenoc Bridge, advancing a regiment towards Newark, halting in about that position for further orders, but in the meantime foraging. (21 November.) To Pickering was intrusted the task of transporting boats from the Notch to Acquaquenoc Bridge, and his personal attention enjoined. (22 November.) Lieutenant-Colonel Humphreys was despatched to West Point to inform Heath of the intended movement, and thence to White Plains, where a detachment lay that was to move "precisely at four o'clock, and commence a slow and regular march towards Kingsbridge," until preconcerted signals should direct them to press forward with "the greatest rapidity." Knox was to have his park of artillery ready on Friday "to cover a body of troops in their passage across a river," while Sheldon's regiment and the Connecticut State troops were to cut off Frog's Neck, and the refugee corps at Morrisania. To Major Crane was suggested the possibility of throwing a body of troops undiscovered on the island.

The intention failed at the last moment. "The Commander-in-Chief spent a whole campaign in ripening this project. Boats, mounted on travelling-carriages, were kept constantly with the army. The Marquis de Lafayette, at the head of the Light Infantry, was to have made the attack at the right on Fort Washington. The period chosen for this enterprise was the very time, when

to pursue the exchange on the footing of composition, according to the valuation or tariff agreed on by the commissioners at Amboy in March last. In this business will of course come into contemplation an equitable adjustment and payment of the accounts of the convention troops. I think it necessary to apprize you of this circumstance, that there may be no misapprehension, and that, if the commissioners meet, they may come clothed with proper powers to render the meeting effectual. I request your speedy answer; after which, the time and place of meeting may be regulated. * * * [1]

the army were to break up their camp and march into winter-quarters; so that the Commander-in-Chief, moving in the dusk of the evening, would have been on the banks of the Hudson, with his whole force, to support the attack. Never was a plan better arranged, and never did circumstances promise more sure or complete success. The British were not only unalarmed, but our own troops were likewise entirely misguided in their expectations. The accidental intervention of some vessels prevented at this time the attempt, which was more than once resumed afterwards. Notwithstanding this favorite project was not ultimately effected, it was evidently not less bold in conception or feasible in accomplishment, than that attempted so successfully at Trenton, or than that which was brought to so glorious an issue in the successful siege of Yorktown."—*Letter of Colonel Humphreys, Life of Putnam*, pp. 13, 15.

Washington merely wrote to each of the commanding officers that "circumstances" had rendered the prosecution of the design "inexpedient."

The foraging expedition was prosecuted, however, by General Stark near the enemy's lines, and with considerable success.

[1] Sir Henry Clinton assented to the proposition contained in this letter, but suggested that the adjustment of accounts should not be limited to the convention troops, but extend to all the prisoners that had been made on both sides during the war, as well British as American. Concerning this point Washington replied that he had written to Congress on the subject; but, since it would take much time to collect and arrange the accounts, he thought it not best to appoint commissioners for the purpose till this should be done. In the meantime the business of exchange might go forward, according to the principles upon which both parties were agreed.

TO JOHN SULLIVAN, IN CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, PASSAIC FALLS,
25 November, 1780.

DR. SIR,

* * * * * *

I intended in my last (but, having spun my letter to an enormous length, deferred it) to have observed, that, as Congress had made one or two late promotions from brigadiers to major-generals, apparently on the principle of a State proportion (which by the way, if made a general rule, I am persuaded will be found hurtful), an idea has occurred to me, that possibly from the same principle, on a future occasion, one might take place which would be particularly injurious. I mean with respect to General Knox. Generals Parsons and Clinton have been superseded by Smallwood. Parsons is since restored to his rank. Except Clinton, Knox now stands first on the list. If from the consideration I have mentioned, or from his being at the head of the artillery, he should be overlooked, and a younger officer preferred, he will undoubtedly quit the service; and you know his usefulness too well not to be convinced, that this would be an injury difficult to be repaired. I do not know, all things considered, who could replace him in his department. I am sure, if a question of this kind should be agitated when you were present, this intimation would be unnecessary to induce you to interpose; but, lest you should be absent at the time, I think it would be advisable to apprize some other members, in whom you have confidence, to guard against it. Perhaps indeed for sores recd. by irregu-

lar promotions or mistakes, tho' they may afterwards receive a plaister, does not always meet a cure, but proves that inattention or want of information was the cause of the wound.

If the sentiments contained in my letter to Congress of this date respecting the Inspectorate department are happy enough to coincide with yours, I have no doubt of your giving them a proper support—To me it appears a matter of importance to keep the present Inspectors in office; and sure I am, that it is the true interest and policy of Congress, to make these offices more the object of desire by the officers who fill them than of favor from them. In the one case the duties will be discharged properly; in the other they may be slighted or not executed at all—the additional pay necessary to make it adequate to the trouble and confinement incident to the office, would be very trifling—and the future one nothing, as they will not burthen the half pay list, being officers in the line, and receiving half pay accordingly, and no other.

With great &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, MORRIS TOWN, 28 November, 1780.

I arrived at this place to-day, having yesterday broke up the Camp near the Passaic Falls, and detached the Troops to their different places of Cantonment. I shall repair to New Windsor, where I purpose

[1] In a letter to the President of Congress, dated the 26th of November, General Washington said: "The death of that useful and valuable officer, Mr. Erskine, geographer to the army, makes it requisite that a successor should be appointed. I beg leave to recommend Mr. Simeon Dewitt. His being in the

to establish my Winter-Quarters, after having made some necessary regulations here and visited the Hospitals.

The following will be the general position of the army during the Winter. The Pennsylvania line about four miles from hence in part of the huts, which were occupied by the Troops last Winter; the Jersey line at Pompton, with a detachment from thence to secure the entrance of the Clove near Suffran's, (the design of these is not only to cover the Country and our communication with the Delaware, but as much as possible to ease us in the article of transportation.) The Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island lines in the Highlands, upon the East side of Hudson's River; the Massachusetts line at West Point, Moylan's regiment of horse at Lancaster in Pennsylvania, and Sheldon's at Colchester in Connecticut. One Regiment of New York is in Garrison at Fort Schuyler, and another is at Saratoga; but to give more effectual security to the Northern and Western Frontiers, which are both much exposed and harrassed, I propose, if provision can be had, which is exceedingly doubtful, to send the remainder of the line to Albany and Schenectady, where it will be ready to act as occasion may require, and the officers will have it more in their power to arrange themselves agreeably to the New Establishment.

I have lately had a very pressing application from

department gives him a pretension, and his abilities are still better. From the character Mr. Erskine always gave of him, and from what I have seen of his performances, he seems to be extremely well qualified." In compliance with this recommendation, Mr. Dewitt was appointed geographer to the army.

Colo. Scammell for liberty to resign the office of Adjutant-General, and resume the Command of his Regiment. Finding him determined upon the measure, I thought it my duty to cast about for a proper person to succeed him in so important an office, before I mentioned his request. The Gentleman I would recommend is Brigadier-General Hand, who I have sounded upon the occasion, and who I find will accept the appointment, should Congress think proper to confer it upon him. His rank, independent of his other qualities, is a circumstance of consequence. Besides giving weight and dignity to the office, it will take off any uneasiness, which might have arisen, had an officer younger than any of the present Inspectors been appointed; because by the Regulations the Adjutt.-General is Assistt. Inspector-General, and of course commands the others in that Department. I shall very reluctantly part with Colo. Scammell, as he has constantly performed his duty to my entire approbation, and to the satisfaction of the army; but his reasons, (which I should have transmitted at length, had I not sent up his letter among my papers to New Windsor,) were such as I could not oppose, without requiring him to make greater sacrifices than he assured me his fortune would afford.[1]

[1] *Extract from Colonel Scammell's Letter:* "Congress having put the regiment in point of numbers and term of service on a reputable footing, and being so much reduced in property as not to be able to equip myself for the office I at present have the honor to hold, I beg your Excellency will please to grant or obtain leave for me to retire from the staff department, and rejoin my regiment by the 1st of January next; that I may have an early opportunity to attend to the internal police and recruiting of it, and my successor, of gaining a perfect knowledge of the business of the office previous to the commencement of the next campaign."—November 16th.

Having received information, through Major Tallmadge (of the 2d Regiment of Dragoons,) that the enemy had collected a valuable Magazine of Forage at Coram upon Long Island, the destruction of which he at the same time offered to attempt with my permission, (which he obtained,) I do myself the honor to enclose a copy of his report by which Congress will perceive how very handsomely he acquitted himself in the execution of his whole plan. There can be no stronger proof of the gallant behavior and good conduct of the Major and his Officers, and of the bravery and fidelity of his men, than the recital of the circumstances attending the affair throughout its progress. With great respect I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 8 December, 1780.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Since mine of yesterday by the Count de Custine,[2] another opportunity has offered of writing to you more leisurely; and, as your departure for the southward, if that ultimately should be your determination, may be incommoded by delay, I have taken the liberty of facilitating your journey by the enclosed dispatches.[3]

[1] Read in Congress, December 4th. Referred to Sullivan, Cornell, and Mathews.

[2] The Count de Custine was in command of the regiment of Saintonge.

[3] When the army went into winter-quarters, the light infantry corps, which had been commanded by Lafayette, was broken up, and the different parts rejoined the lines and regiments to which they originally belonged. Seeking activity and opportunities for distinguishing himself, Lafayette had formed a

I beg you to be persuaded, however, that I do not mean by this to fix your determination of serving in the Southern Army. It is my earnest wish, (as I mentioned at Morris Town,) that you shd. be governed in this matter by European and Southern advices, wch. ought & alone can determine you with propriety—These you are more in the way of receiving than I am. If there is a prospect of a naval superiority in these Seas, and an augmentation of the (French) land force at Rhode Island, I shall, with the freedom of a friend, give it as my opinion, that your going to the Southern Army, (if you expect a command in this,) will answer no valuable purpose, but must be fatiguing to yourself, and embarrassing to General [Greene,] as it may contravene a permanent arrangement, to the disgust of those, who, considering themselves as belonging to that army, may be hurt by disappointments. On the other hand, if we are likely to remain in a state of inactivity in this quarter, your seeking service to the Southward, where there is a more fruitful field for enterprise, is not only an evidence of your zeal, but will be supported by every rule of military reasoning. Hence it is, I again repeat, that circumstances should alone decide. In all places, and at all times, my best wishes for your health, honor, and glory will accompany you. With much truth I can add, that I am, my dear Marquis, &c.

project of transferring his services to the southern army under General Greene during the winter, and had asked General Washington's advice. Lafayette was now in Philadelphia, having gone thither immediately after the separation of his detachment of light infantry.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

NEW WINDSOR, 10 December, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 28th ult. I met with on my way to these quarters, where I arrived on the 6th inst. The suggestions contained in it required no apology, as it gives me pleasure at all times to know the sentiments of others upon matters of public utility. Those, however, which you have delivered relative to an enterprise against the enemy in New York, exhibit strong evidence how little the world is acquainted with the circumstances and strength of our army. A small second embarkation took place about the middle of last month; if another is in contemplation, to take effect at the reduction of our force, (which I think exceedingly probable,) it is too much in embryo to form more than conjectural opinions of it at this time. But I will suppose it large, and that not more than 6000 regular troops will be left behind. Where are the men? Where are the provisions? Where the clothes, the everything necessary to warrant the attempt you propose in an inclement season? Our numbers, never equal to those of the enemy in New York,—our State lines, never half complete in men, but perfectly so in every species of want, were diminished in the field so soon as the weather began to grow cold; near 2000 men on account of clothes, which I had not to give, nor ought to have given (supposing a surplusage,) to the levies whose dismission was near at hand. And now, to prevent the man who is a permanent soldier from starving, I am

obliged, in place of calling in the aid of militia for new enterprises, to diminish the levies on account of the provision. Under this description of our circumstances, (which is not high-coloured,) and when it is added that, instead of getting lumber from Albany for building barracks on York Island, in the manner and for the purpose you mention, that we have neither money nor credit adequate to the purchase of a few boards for doors to our log huts; when every ounce of forage that has been used in the latter part of the campaign, and a good deal of the provision, has been taken at the point of the bayonet; when we were from the month of May to the month of September assembling militia that ought to have been in the field by the middle of July, and then obliged to dismiss them for want of supplies; when we cannot despatch an officer or common express upon the most urgent occasion, for want of the means of support; and when I further add—but this is a matter of trivial concern, because it is of a present nature—that I have not been able to obtain a farthing of public money for the support of my table for near two months, you can be at no loss, as I have before observed, to discover the impracticability of executing the measure you suggested, even supposing the enemy's numbers were reduced to your standard, but which, by the way, neither is nor will be the case till the reduction of our army takes place, the period for which they know as well as we do, and will, I have little doubt, govern themselves accordingly. An earnest desire,

however, of closing the campaign with eclat, led me to investigate the means most thoroughly of doing it; and my wishes had so far got the better of my judgment, that I had actually made some pretty considerable advances in the prosecution of a plan for the purpose, when, alas! I found the means inadequate to the end, and that it was with difficulty I could remove the army to its respective places of cantonment, where it would be well for the troops if, like chameleons, they could live upon air, or, like the bear, suck their paws for sustenance during the rigor of the approaching winter. I am, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
10 December, 1780.

SIR,

I have received Your Excellency's favors of the 14th, 16th, 24th, 27th November and 1st of this month. In apology for suffering so many of your letters to remain so long unanswered, I must assure you, that I have been constantly employed, since I broke up my camp near Passaic Falls, in visiting the winter cantonments of the army between Morristown and this place. I have experienced the highest satisfaction in the visits, which Chevalier Chastellux, Viscount Noailles, Count de Damas, Count de Custine, and the Marquis de Laval have done me the honor to make me.[1] I have only to regret, that their stay

[1] These gentlemen were officers in the French army under Count de Rochambeau.

with me was so short. I unfortunately missed seeing the Count de Deuxponts, who had left my quarters on his way to Philadelphia before I arrived at them. I however flatter myself, that I shall have the pleasure of seeing him on his return.

I very much approve of your intention of quartering the second division in Connecticut, rather than in Massachusetts. The troops will certainly be more convenient to the probable scene of operations.[1] I shall withdraw the chain of our dragoons, and shall in future send my despatches to the Duke de Lauzun at Lebanon, as your Excellency desires. I wish it were in my power to furnish your Excellency with the New York papers; but as our communication with that place is very irregular, I only obtain them accidentally. I now enclose you one, which contains nothing material, but the account of the late dreadful hurri-

[1] The second division of the French troops destined for America, which had been blockaded in the harbor of Brest, was expected daily on the coast. Count de Rochambeau had visited New London, Norwich, Lebanon, Windham, and other towns, and ascertained that the troops might be well provided for in those places. As this division never arrived, there was no occasion for further preparations. The French army remained during the winter at Newport, except the Duke de Lauzun's legion, which was cantoned at Lebanon, not far from the residence of Governor Trumbull, where a supply of forage could be easily obtained.

The son of Count de Rochambeau, then a colonel in the army, was sent to France with despatches containing the results of the conference at Hartford, and particularly a memoir setting forth the wants of the Americans in men, ships, and money. In case the vessel should be in danger of capture, Colonel Rochambeau was instructed to sink his papers, and make a verbal communication of their contents to the minister. La Pérouse commanded the frigate, which was sent with these despatches. To escape the British fleet, then blockading the harbor of Newport, he went to sea, on the 28th of October, in a violent gale of wind, and passed unharmed through the British squadron. He was chased, and his frigate was dismasted, but not till it had got beyond the reach of the enemy.—*Mémoires de Rochambeau*, tom. i., p. 256.—*Sparks*.

cane in the West Indies. I take the opportunity of sending this by Colonel Fleury, who returns to your army. I was made very happy in again seeing that amiable and valuable officer, whose services I have experienced upon so many occasions.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

NEW WINDSOR, 11th December, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your favors of the 25th and 28th of last Month, and it gives me very great pleasure to find that you are appointed to a Committee the subject of whose deliberations you are so well acquainted with—and it adds not a little to my satisfaction to hear, that it is generally composed of Gentlemen remarkable for their good sense & patriotism, at a time when there never was greater occasion for men of those qualifications.

The general good disposition prevailing in the State, to promote measures of public utility, is also a happy presage that matters will mend, in your quarter at least— But how unfortunate is it, that the fatal system of temporary enlistments should still have such an influence, as to have prevailed upon your Legislature to adopt the measure of raising their recruits for three years only? which in other words, is nothing more nor less, than an inducement to the enemy to prosecute the War three years longer.

[1] Colonel Fleury, so much distinguished for his bravery at Fort Mifflin, Stony Point, and other places, had left the American service, and was now an officer in the army of Count de Rochambeau.

You have, to your cost, been a witness to the pernicious consequences attending a temporary army, and have therefore the better right to point out to your fellow Citizens what may be expected while the system is pursued.—I will still hope that they will upon a reconsideration of the matter, and conformably to the requisition of Congress, determine upon raising their men for the *War only*.

I have, by this opportunity, transmitted to his Excellency the Governor an acct. of the places which will be, in my opinion, most convenient & proper for the deposit of Salt, Salt meat, & Rum— The Weekly, or Monthly supplies of Beef Cattle, & the places at which they are to be delivered, will be pointed out occasionally by the Commissary General—He is not at present with the Army— I can therefore only say, that if he has given no directions to the contrary, the present Monthly demand should be complied with.— Should it amount to more than the consumption the best can be Salted down on their arrival here.—

Your remarks on the last clause of the act of requisition are undoubtedly very just, and I am confident it will be found upon examination that some States have been largely deficient in their specific supplies; otherwise we should not at this alarming period of the year, be destitute of Flour for which I see no other chance of a supply than the state of New York being obliged to take measures that will be very disagreeable, & most oppressive to individuals.—It is a matter of delicacy with me to complain to Congress of the default of any of the States, or to criticize upon their own acts. And I should therefore be very

happy to see any of the Legislatures take the matter up, & point out the dangers arising from such a latitude as is given in the case to which you allude.

To add to our other difficulties, the situation of the Army in respect to cloathing, is really distressing.—By collecting all our remnants, and those of a thousand colors & kinds, we shall scarcely make them comfortable. Uniformity, one of the essentials of discipline, & every thing in the appearance of a Soldier, must be dispensed with ;—and what makes the matter more mortifying is, that we have, I am positively assured Ten thousand compleat suits ready in France & laying there because our public agents cannot agree whose business it is to ship them—a quantity has also lain in the West Indies for more than Eighteen Months, owing probably to some such cause.

You tell me there is cloathing enough lately arrived in private bottoms to supply the army.—This my dear Sir is only tantalizing the Naked—such is the miserable state of Continental credit that we cannot command a yard of it.—Some of the States may, & I hope will derive an advantage from it, in which case I hope they will attend to the colors proper for their uniform—I informed them *all* very lately, to what a miserable condition the Troops would be reduced except they would lay themselves out for Cloathing—I am certain that had our supply of that artical been ample we could have enlisted a great proportion of the Levies who would for the sake of Cloaths have dispensed with the money bounty for the present.

With every Sentiment of regard & affection I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

DEAR SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 13 December, 1780.

It gives me much pleasure to hear, that my letters of introduction were serviceable to you. I am persuaded there is not wanting a disposition in Congress, or the individual States to the Southward, to afford you every support the unhappy state of our finance (which seems to be the source from whence flows all our difficulties) will admit; but if any thing in my power can give a spring to their exertions, every motive, which can flow from public and private considerations, will urge me to comply with y'r wishes. You have no doubt an arduous task in hand; but where is the man charged with conducting public business in these days of public calamity, that is exempt from it? Your difficulties I am persuaded are great; they may be insurmountable; but you see them now through a different medium than you have ever done before, because the embarrassment of every department is now concentred or combined in the commanding officer, exhibiting at one view a prospect of our complicated distresses.

Your friends, and the great public, expect every thing from your abilities, that the means which may be put into your hands are competent to; but they both know full well the deranged situation of our Southern affairs; and neither, I trust, are so unreasonable as to expect impossibitities. I therefore think, that you have nothing to apprehend on the score of public dissatisfaction; on the contrary, that you may gain but cannot lose in your military reputation.

I will put your letter under cover to Mrs. Greene, and request her to make use of the same channel of conveyance back. I shall take much pleasure in forwarding the letters to and from her and think it the best medium of conveyance for safety. I have the pleasure to inform you that I learned by Genl. Varnum (who went on to Congress yesterday) that Mrs. Greene and your family were well when he left Rhode Island. Genl. McDougall talks of setting out for Congress the beginning of next week, but, if he reaches Phila. by the opening of next campaign it will be as much as I expect from his despatch.

We reached our Winter-qrs. about the beginning of this month, and I have been driven by necessity to discharge the Levies. Want of cloathing rendered them unfit for duty, and want of Flour would have disbanded the whole army, if I had not adopted this expedient for the relief of the Soldiers for the war. Without knowing that Colo. Hamilton ever had an Eye to the office of Adjt.-General, I did, upon the application of Colo. Scammell to resign it, recommend Genl. Hand for reasons which may occur to you.[1] One of them, (and not the smallest,) was, by having an

[1] General Greene had expressed a desire that Hamilton might receive the appointment of adjutant-general. "Colonel Scammell," said he, "perhaps will be promoted to the rank of brigadier. At least it has been talked of. Should this take place, a new adjutant-general will be necessary; and I beg leave to suggest the propriety of giving this appointment to Colonel Hamilton. His services may not be less important to your Excellency in your family business, if he only employs a deputy extraordinary; and I am persuaded the appointment will be received with great gratitude, as I am confident it is his wish, by what he said some time before I left camp."—*Richmond*, November 19th. See Letter to Congress, November 28th. Lafayette made the same suggestion.

officer of rank appointed, to guard against the discontents, which would have arisen in the Inspectorate department, if a junr. officer to the present Sub-Inspectors had been appointed; for you know, that, by the present establishment of the Inspection, the Adjt.-Genl. for the time being is the Second officer in that line. It would have been disagreeable therefore to the present Sub-Inspectors, some of whom are full Colonels, to have had a Lt.-colonel put over them.

With much sincerity I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 14 December, 1780.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Soon after despatching my last letter to you, your favor dated at Paramus was put into my hands by Colo. Gouvion. Yesterday brought me your letters of the 4th, 5th, and 5th in the evening, and this day I have received another of the 9th. The Chevr. de la Luzerne's despatches came in time for the post, which is the only means left me for the conveyance of letters, there not being as much money in the hands of the Q.-M.-Genl. (I believe I might go further and say, in those of the whole army), as would bear the expense of an express to Rhode Island. I could not get one the other day to ride so far as Pompton!

I am now writing to the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevr. de Ternay on the subject of your several letters. When their answer arrives, I will communicate the contents to you. You must be convinced, from what passed at the interview at Hartford, that

my command of the *French Troops* at R. Id. stands upon a very limited scale, and that it would be impolitic and fruitless in me to propose any measure of coöperation to a third power without their concurrence; consequently an application from you antecedently to an official proposition from his Excellency the minister of France, the Gentn. at the head of the French armament at Rhode Island, the Congress, or myself, cou'd only be considered as coming from a private Gentn. It is therefore my advice to you to postpone your correspondence with the Spanish genels., and let your influence come in hereafter, as auxiliary to something more formal and official. I do not hesitate in giving it clearly as my opinion to you (but this opinion and this business should be concealed behind a curtain), that the favorable moment of the Spanish operations in the Floridas ought to be improved to the utmost extent of our means; provided the Spaniards, by a junction of their maritime force with that of his Most Christian Majesty under the command of the Chevalr. de Ternay, will give us a secure convoy, and engage not to leave us till the operations of the Campaign are at an end, or it can be done by consent of parties.

I am very thankful to the minister for permitting, and to you for communicating to General Greene, the intelligence of the Spanish movements towards the Floridas. It may have a happy influence on his measures; it may be equally advantageous to the Spaniards. Your expressions of personal attachment and affection to me are flattering and pleasing, and

fill me with gratitude. It is unnecessary, I trust, on my part, to give you assurances of mutual regard, because I hope you are convinced of it; and, as I have already put it absolutely in your own choice to go to the southern army, or to stay with this, circumstances and inclination alone must govern you. It would add to my pleasure, if I could encourage your hope of Colo. Neville's exchange. I refused to interest myself in the exchange of my own aid. Genl. Lincoln's were exchanged with *himself;* and, upon that occasion, (for I know of no other,) Congress passed a resolve prohibiting exchanges out of the order of captivity.

Under one general head I shall express my concern for your disappointment of letters, our disappointment of cloaths, and disappointment in the mode of raising men; but I shall congratulate you on the late change of the administration of France, as it seems to be consonant to your wishes, and to encourage hope.[1] I am much pleased at the friendly disposition of Portugal. Much good, I hope, will result from the combination of the maritime powers. I am in very confined quarters; little better than those at Valley Forge; but such as they are, I shall welcome into them your friends on their return to Rhode Island. I am, &c.

[1] M. de Sartine, the French Minister of Marine, had retired, and been succeeded by the Marquis de Castries, whom Lafayette represented as "a man of great worth," who would take a more lively interest in the affairs of his office, and act with more efficiency than his predecessor. Count de Rochambeau also said: "He is one of our best lieutenant-generals, and a most firm man." By the French officers generally, the change seems to have been considered auspicious for the operations in America.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU AND THE CHEVALIER DE TERNAY.

NEW WINDSOR, 15 December, 1780.

GENTLEMEN,

Two days ago I did myself the honor to inform his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau, that Sir Henry Clinton was making another embarkation. This is since confirmed by other accounts; but I have received none yet, which fix the particular corps or numbers with certainty, though all agree, that this detachment is intended as a reinforcement to Lord Cornwallis, that it is to consist of about two thousand five hundred, and that it is the intention of the enemy to push their operations to the southward this winter in the most vigorous manner. Official information is likewise lately received, that this is the resolution of the British cabinet, and that for this purpose a powerful reinforcement is to be sent to America with all possible despatch.

When it is considered how essential it is to the independence of the United States, and how important to the interest of their allies, that the common enemy should be obliged to relinquish their conquests in South Carolina and Georgia, your Excellencies will, I am confident, agree in opinion with me, that no means ought to be left unessayed to endeavor to dislodge them in the course of this winter and next spring.

It is needless for me to enter into a detail of the situation of our affairs to the southward. Your Excellencies must know, that, from the great loss of men, artillery, and stores in Charleston, and from the

defeat of our army near Camden, we can only hope to reassemble such a force, and that chiefly of raw troops, as will prevent the enemy from extending their conquests over North Carolina. To attempt the reduction of Charleston, supposing we had men sufficient for the purpose, is a thing impracticable, while the transportation of artillery and all kinds of stores proper for a siege must be made from hence by land.

I am informed by the Marquis de Lafayette, who is still at Philadelphia, that a vessel had just arrived at that place from L'Orient, which port she left the middle of October; but as he makes no mention of the second division of land and sea forces, expected in America to reinforce the army and navy at present under your Excellencies' respective commands, I am led to believe, that the much desired event is more remote than under present circumstances is to be wished.

A piece of intelligence, which has been communicated to me in confidence by His Excellency the Minister Plenipotentiary of France, has turned my attention towards a new object, and brought into my mind the outlines of a plan, which, if it can be acceded to by the parties necessary to its execution, may be attended with the most solid and permanent advantages. The communication of His Excellency the minister is, that the court of Spain have in contemplation two expeditions against the British settlements in the Floridas, Pensacola and St. Augustine. The first, consisting of four thousand men convoyed by

eight ships of war, had sailed from Havana the 16th of October. The force destined against the last was twelve ships of the line, besides frigates and bomb-ketches, and ten thousand men. These were to leave the Havana some time in the present month. The plan, with which I am impressed, and which I would submit to your Excellency's consideration, is, the propriety of attempting to combine our force with that of Spain for the purpose of totally subduing the common enemy, not only in the Floridas, but in the States of South Carolina and Georgia.

It is not for me, at this moment, to enter upon a detail of the business. My general ideas are, that a proposition or request should be made to the general and admiral of the Spanish forces (and through them to the governor of the Havana, if they are not themselves at liberty to accede to the proposal,) to coöperate conjunctively or by diversion for the purposes I have mentioned. In case they do accede, their ships of war are to be sent, as soon as they have made good the debarkation of their troops at St. Augustine, or at any other given point, to form a junction with the squadron of his Most Christian Majesty at Rhode Island, and take under their convoy the French and American troops, destined for the expedition against Charleston ; the first of which will be embarked at Newport, the last at Philadelphia. I should make such drafts from this army, as would amount to two thousand men *at least*. His Excellency the Count de Rochambeau would, I should hope, be able to detach double that number, and leave a sufficiency with

the militia, who might be called in upon the occasion, to give security to your works, hospitals, and spare stores, should you choose to leave the two last behind you. These corps, and the troops who will be collected under the command of General Greene, in conjunction with the force, which may be furnished by the Spaniards in the manner aforementioned, will form an army not to be resisted by any, which the British can draw together in that quarter, and capable of effecting the utmost wishes of the allied powers.

It is unnecessary for me to remark, that the basis of my plan and propositions is, that the combined fleets shall be decidedly superior to that of the enemy, and that they shall coöperate to the completion of the enterprise, or until it shall be abandoned by general consent. To ensure so essential a point as that of a naval superiority, the propriety of a further requisition to the admiral, commanding his Most Christian Majesty's fleet in the West Indies, is submitted to your Excellencies' judgments.

I persuade myself that your Excellencies will view these propositions with an eye to all their consequences, and candidly approve or reject them as they appear to you practicable or proper. In making them I am solely influenced by motives of general good, and would not wish them carried into execution, unless they shall be deemed as conducive to the interests of the powers, who have generously stepped in to our relief, as to those of the United States.

Should the plan happily meet your Excellencies approbations I have to request, that the Chevalier de Ternay would be good enough to despatch a

frigate, if one can be spared, with the substance of these propositions to the generals of his Most Catholic Majesty; duplicate and triplicate of which I will endeavor to forward via Philadelphia. If the communication is to be made, no time should be lost in doing it, and procuring an answer. I think I could, in a month after hearing of the proposition being agreed to on the part of Spain, be ready to embark at Philadelphia, if the state of the River Delaware will admit of it.

I cannot conclude this letter, without mentioning an argument, which in my opinion ought to induce the Spaniards to accept of these propositions. The force, which the British will be able to draw together in South Carolina and Georgia, will be so much superior to the American, that they may, without putting matters to the risk, leave small garrisons in Savannah and Charleston, and throw such a reinforcement into St. Augustine, a very strong fortification, as will in all probability defeat the enterprise; whereas, if they find that measures are pursuing to divest them of those acquisitions, which I am convinced they mean to make the basis of a negotiation, I think it more than probable that they will abandon the Floridas to their fate, and exert themselves to the utmost to retain the only apparent compensation for their vast expenditure of blood and treasure. Besides this, the Spaniard ought to reflect, that, while Britain is in possession of Georgia and South Carolina, he must hold ye Floridas by a very precarious tenure or by a very expensive one. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] This plan was not approved by Count de Rochambeau. News had lately arrived of the appointment of a new Minister of Marine, of the preparation of

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEADQUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
17 December, 1780.

SIR:

I submitted to the interference of the State of Connecticut last year, with respect to the cantonment of the Horse without any animadversion or remark, because I was hopeful that the impropriety of it would appear to them and prevent the like in future. I shall, (as it is the request of the State, and because it is my wish to harmonize as much as possible, with the civil authority, in the prosecution of a cause in which we are all equally interested) send Sheldon's regiment this winter to the State of Massachusetts;

a grand armament at Brest, and the assembling of a large Spanish force at Cadiz, which it was rumored would be under the command of Count d'Estaing; and there was every probability, in the opinion of Count de Rochambeau, that despatches from the French ministry would very soon arrive, which would contain a plan of operations. In this view he could not with propriety engage in any measures, which might thwart such a plan. It was moreover his belief, that the Spanish commander in the West Indies had his course of action marked out by definite instructions, and would not assume the responsibility of sending a squadron to transport the French and American troops to the south. Again, the Chevalier de Monteil, the French admiral commanding in the West Indies, had only a small force in those seas since the departure of M. de Guichen for Europe, and would not be able to furnish such a number of vessels from his squadron, as would ensure a naval superiority on the American coast.

The Chevalier de Ternay died at Newport, on the 15th of December, after a short illness. He was succeeded in the command of the fleet by the Chevalier Destouches, who replied to the above letter in relation to his department, that the season was extremely unfavorable to the project in question. The northeasterly winds were so prevalent and strong, that he did not think the Spanish vessels could lie at anchor off Rhode Island. And he also agreed with Count de Rochambeau in believing, that the Spanish officers would consider themselves so rigidly bound by their instructions, as to deter them from listening to proposals that would divert them from the enterprise in which they were engaged. He added, that his own squadron could not be put into a condition to depart, by reason of a deficiency in the supplies of hard bread.—*MS. Letter of Rochambeau and Destouches*, December 22d.—*Sparks*.

but I cannot help remonstrating very pointedly against a repetition of the practice, in future, for the following reasons:—Four things have always influenced me in the distribution of the troops to their winter cantonments,—security of our capital posts, which makes it necessary that they should have such a relative situation to each other as to afford the necessary succor; cover to the Country; their own convenience; and the convenience of the inhabitants where the two last were not incompatible with the two first.—

It is unnecessary, I am persuaded, for me to remark that if any one State can or will undertake to point out a cantonment for one part of the Army, another may with equal propriety do it for another part; and that upon the same principle, and by the same parity of reasoning, that Connecticut undertakes to advise or direct Sheldon's Horse to Massachusetts, Massachusetts may order them to New Hampshire, and New Hampshire to some other State. In a word, it is striking at the most essential privilege of the Commander in Chief, and is pregnant with every mischief that can be conceived. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN SULLIVAN, IN CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 17 December, 1780.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter 9th is safe at hand and propounds a question respecting promotion, which I candidly acknowledge I am puzzled to answer with satisfaction to myself. If in all cases ours was *one* army, or *thir-*

teen armies allied for the common defence, there would be no difficulty in solving your question; but we are occasionally both, and I should not be much out if I were to say, that we are sometimes *neither*, but a compound of *both*.

If we were considered in every point of view as one army, lineal promotion, as well from as to the rank of colonel, would undoubtedly be the most equitable and satisfactory mode of rising; and no possible objection could be made to it by any State, or the Troops of a State; or, if Congress, having regard to the number of Troops, which each State is to furnish to the Confederated Army, were to allow the number of General officers, which should be thought competent thereto, there would be no difficulty here neither, because the promotion would be lineal in each State; and, though it might fall hard upon the Colonels of such States as only furnish one regiment for Continental Service, it would be incidental to their State quotas, and must be submitted to; as the annexation of their Regiments to other State Troops, also, must be, to form Brigades. But it is our having no *fixed* principle, that *I* know of, and sometimes acting upon one and then the other of the cases before mentioned (as it happens to suit an individual State, or particular characters,) that creates our difficulties and the discontents that prevail.

It is well known, that in the early stages of this war I used every means in my power to destroy all kinds of State distinctions, and labored to have every part and parcel of the army considered as Continental,

The steps, which have led to a different sentimt. and to our present system of politics, you are not to be informed of. We must take things as they are. And therefore, under the ideas that prevail, and our *general* practice, I am, though puzzled, more inclined to let all promotions be lineal in each State, to the rank of Brigadr. inclusive (where there is more than one regiment), than to any other mode; because it is more consonant to the expectation of the Army than any other; and because, under it, I believe a newly appointed brigadr. from the Southern Troops would at this day be disagreeable to an Eastern Brigade, and *vice versa*. How far State promotions beyond the Rank of Brigadrs. are eligible or not, is a matter on which much may be said on both sides. On the one hand, it may be urged that the State, which sends more than a Brigade into the Field, has as good a right to accompany them with a Majr. Genl. as ye middling State has to furnish a Brigr., or the smallest a Colo., because neither has more than its due proportion of officers. On the other hand, it may be observed, that, as officers advance in rank and acquire that general knowledge, which is necessary to qualify them for extensive command, their feelings are more hurt, and the Service more injured, by placing juniors over them, than when it happens to inferiors; though the same principle, which bars the rise of a Colo. where there is but one regiment, will apply to a Brigadr., where the State only furnishes a brigade. At prest. we want no new Majr.-Generals, (having rather a surplusage); but may not the follow-

ing expedient answer in future, at least in a degree, the views of all; namely, to suffer the larger States to have Majr.-Genls. of their own line proportioned to the number of their Troops, and the other Majr.-Genls. to be promoted from Brigadiers according to seniority? This, at the same time that it yields compliance to the views of the large States, does not preclude the Brigadiers of the smaller from promotion, as there must be Major-Generals for separate comds., and for the wings of the army, &c., wch. cannot be supplied by the State quotas of Troops, where there is no more than a just proportion of officers to men.

Our present mode of promotion is regimentally to Captns. inclusively, and in the Line of the State afterwards. But I am convinced, as well from the reason and justice of the thing, as from several conversations I have held with some of the most judicious officers of the army, that it would be more agreeable to it, that all promotion should be lineal, instead of Regimental, in every State line; for which reasons I shall recomd. the measure to Congrs. to take place with the New Establishmt. of the army.

What I have here said with respect to promotion is general; but there is a case before me in the Jersey line, which makes me wish that Congress would fix their principle. This State has three Regiments, which are to be reduced to two. Dayton is the Senr. Colonel, and among the oldest of that rank in the whole army, a valuable officer, and does not want to leave the Service. Shreve is the next oldest Colo. in Jersey, and will *not* go out. His character you are as

well acquainted with as I am. Ogden is the youngest and extremely desirous of staying, but cannot continue if Colonel Dayton remains in Service in his present rank. The matter, therefore, (as it is related to me,) is brought to this Issue, that Dayton or Ogden is to go out, unless the former can be promoted, which would remove every difficulty, and be agreeable to the prest. system of State policy, as there is no Genl. officer in that line; but if the promotion is delayed till after the first of Jany., or, in other words, till after Dayton or Ogden is deranged, the remedy will come too late; because we shall have sent out a valuable officer upon half-pay, and will, if Dayton is the person that goes, have a person to promote. Who? But here I drop the curtain. It may suffice to say, that, if the State of New Jersey is to be allowed a brigr., it ought to be granted before the first of January for more reasons than that of œconomy.

That you may have some data to judge of the propriety of new appointments, I shall take the liberty of observing, that the States, from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania inclusively, with Hazen's Regimt., make by the last requisition 29 battalions of Infantry. That three of these Battns., according to the present establishmt. of the army, will make as large a Brigade as four of the old, and that the number of Brigadiers in the States I have mentioned amounts at this time to no more than eight, viz., Stark, of N. Hampshire, Glover and Paterson of Massachusetts, Huntington of Connecticut, Clinton of New York, and Wayne, Hand, and Irvine of Pennsylva.; and these may be

reduced to Seven, if Hand should be placed in the Staff. I am most firmly of opinion, that, after the States have brought their Troops into the Field, the less they have to do with them, or their supplies of Cloathing, &c., &c., the better it will be for the common Interest; for reasons which manifest themselves more and more every day, and for the clearest evidence of public œconomy. I am, dear Sir, with much esteem, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 20 December, 1780.

SIR,

At a time when the Army is about to undergo a material change—when Congress and the States individually, are disposed to establish it upon the best principles for the equal administration of justice, and the preservation of the rights of the Officers, I am persuaded it will not be deemed presumptuous in me to offer any opinion which in my judgment, may serve to promote either of these ends and render our Military system as unexceptionable as possible—upon this ground therefore, I take the liberty of observing,

That promotion in our Army according to the custom which prevails at present, is regimental to the rank of Captain—thence in each State line to the grade of Colonel—both inclusive. I do not at this time recollect the inducements which led to the regimental promotion, but as it has been found productive of many hard cases injurious to the feelings of Officers, I would propose that *all* promotion in the respective

State lines, to the rank of Colonels inclusive should be lineal.—This may disappoint the hopes of a few Subalterns, who perchance stand high in the Regiments they are newly arranged to, but can do no injustice to any of them, and will remedy the evils complained of as every vacancy will then be filled by the senior Officer of the next grade where there is no interposition in favor of extra merit, or exclusion for want of it.

A regulation like this is so consonant to the principles of justice, and so agreeable to the wishes of the Army in general (as far as I have been able to collect the sentiments of it) that I think there can be no possible objection to the alteration proposed.

By resignations (chiefly), deaths and other casualties, we have instances, and not a few of them Sergeants, even in one regiment coming to the command of Companies, before Lieutenants in another. This, though submitted to, has been the cause of much discontent, as it always hurts the feelings of an Officer to obey those whom he has commanded.

The Artillery and Cavalry have heretofore been considered in the same light as the line of a State, and rose accordingly ; that is regimentally to the rank of Captn. and in their respective lines afterwards ; and this mode I presume must still be continued, or their rise made wholly regimental (as the regiments are from different States) otherwise the Officers of different States would very soon get blended together which does not seem to be the intention of Congress by their apportioning of them to particular States,

nor do I believe it to be the wish of the Officers. But to avoid discontent and the disputes which will arise from clashing interests, it is indispensably necessary to lay down some principle of promotion, declaring it to be lineal, or regimental wholly or partly, as is mentioned before.

It is more difficult, and may be more delicate for me to express a sentiment respecting the promotion of Colonels, and General Officers; but as the good of the Service and the peace of the Army require that some principle should be established by which these promotions should be governed, I have no doubt of its being done.

The custom of appointing the Senior Colonels in each State line to be Brigadiers (where the number of Regiments are sufficient to form a Brigade, or more) has obtained consistency and gives general satisfaction—but the appointment of Major Generals seems to be under no fixed government; for it sometimes happens by seniority, at other times by State, —and has been a source of much discontent; threatning the loss of very good Officers. I see but two ways by which the promotion of Major Generals can take place upon any fixed or satisfactory ground,—and there is not a known rule for it, and if irregular promotions happen, the Service I am certain will be injured by it; because Officers of their rank will not, nor cannot submit to a junior, unless there is some established principle to reconcile it to their feelings—The one is by seniority wholly—the other by seniority and States jointly—As thus :—

If Congress shall judge it consistent with justice and policy to allow Major Generals to the State which have more Brigades than one in the field, let them rise in their own State line by seniority as other Officers do, and as this will not furnish a sufficient number for the Service (as there will be wanting for separate commands—for the wings of the Army,—light Infantry, &c) let the deficiency be taken from the Senior Brigadiers of the *whole* line, to be succeeded by the oldest Colonels of the State lines from whence they are taken—The first mode gives, in all cases, the Senior Brigadier for Major Generals—The second allows each State a compleat Corps of Officers to its quota of Men—and entitles *every* Brigadier in the line besides, to promotion, according to the date of his Commission.

Which of these modes, or whether either of them will be adopted by Congress is submitted to their better judgment—all I aim at is to have some system established by which we may harmonize; for there is nothing more certain than that the promotion of junior Officers over the heads of Seniors, unless it is agreeable to some known and established principle, never fails to produce a great deal of discontent, ill-blood—and party, which are always injurious.—

As I have gone so far into this subject of promotion, there is one point more I would beg leave to touch upon—and that is with respect to the Colonels of the smallest States, whose quota of Troops does not entitle them to a Brigadier, and who without some relief are not only cut of from all hope of pro-

motion—the object of a Soldier's desire—but after years of faithful service, experience the frequent mortification of seeing themselves passed by—this must be exceedingly grating to a deserving officer, and is a personal injury, because the State having but one Regiment can have no claim to a Brigadier—For remedy however of the evil—and the sake of justice I would with all due deference suggest the propriety of promoting them, and others in like circumstances to the Rank of Brigadiers whenever they shall become the Senior Colonels of the *whole* line, and Brigadiers are wanting, which may often be the case for extra service—command of the light Infantry, &c.

Congress will readily perceive that all these are expedients to accommodate matters (in the best manner the nature of the case will admit of) to the system of State Troops—for if we were one Army instead of a confederated Army lineal promotion by the common course of succession—where merit or demerit did not interfere—would be the easiest simplest and most equitable of any; but as this is not the case, and we are considered as a fœderal body, we have three interests to attend to viz:—the common interest—State interest—and individual interest. —Whether any of the expedients I have proposed are likely to answer the ends in view, is submitted with all possible deference, and without further apology by your Exy's &c—

P. S. 26th. This letter has been unavoidably delayed for want of a conveyance.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, January 1st. Referred to Sullivan, Varnum, Bland, and McDougall.

TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY AT THE COURT OF VERSAILLES.

HD.-QRS., NEW WINDSOR, 20 December, 1780.

SIR,

A few days since, by ye Chevr. de Chatelleaux, I had the honor to receive your favor of the 19th of March introductory of him ; and thank you for bringing me acquainted with a gentln. of his merit, knowledge, and agreeable manners. I spent several days very happily with him at our camp near the Great Falls of Passaic in New Jersey, before the army separated for its cantonments, the principal of which is at West point in the vicinity of this place, where I make my own Quarters.

Disappointed of the second division of French troops, but more especially in the expected naval superiority, which was the pivot upon wch. every thing turned, we have been compelled to spend an inactive Campaign, after a flattering prospect at the opening of it, and vigorous struggles to make it a decisive one on our part. Latterly we have been obliged to become spectators of a succession of detachments from the army at New York, in aid of Lord Cornwallis, while our naval weakness, and the political dissolution of a large part of our army, put it out of our power to counteract them at the southward, or take advantage of them here.

The movements of Lord Cornwallis during the last month or two have been retrograde. What turn the late reinforcements, which have been sent to him, may give to his affairs, remains to be known. I have reinforc'd also principally with Horse, but the length

of the march is so much opposed to the measure, that evy. corps is in a greater or lesser degree ruined that encounters it. I am happy, however, in assurg. you, that a better disposition never prevailed in the Legislatures of the several States, than at this time. The folly of temporary expedients are seen into and exploded, and vigorous efforts will be used to obtain a permanent army, and carry on the war systematically, if the obstinacy of Great Britain should compel us to continue it. We want nothing but the aid of a loan to enable us to put our Finance into a tolerable train. The Country does not want resources, but we the means of drawing them forth.

It is unnecessary for me to go into a more detailed acct. of our affairs, as you are doubtless officially advised of every material occurrence. I shall therefore only add my Compliments to Mr. Adams, and the strongest assurances of being, with the greatest esteem and respect, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL DAVID HUMPHREYS.[1]

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

You will take command of such of the Detachments of Water Guards, now on the River, as you may think necessary, and with them attempt to surprise and bring off Genl. Knyphausen from

[1] Colonel Humphreys was provided with two whale-boats and a barge, and accompanied by Captain Wells, Lieutenant Hart, and twenty-eight other persons, including non-commissioned officers and privates. They left the American post at Dobb's Ferry in the evening of the 25th, having agreed on the watchword "Success," and intending to return the same night. The wind was so high during the night, that, not being able to land, they were driven below

Morris's House on York Island, or Sir Henry Clinton from Kennedy's House in the City, if, from the Tide, Weather, and other Circumstances, you shall judge the Enterprise to be practicable. In the execution of it, you will be guided by your own discretion; and I have only to suggest, that secrecy, rapidity, and prudence in making good your retreat, will be indispensably necessary to insure success. Given at Head-Quarters, 23d of December, 1780.

TO JAMES DUANE.

NEW WINDSOR, 26 December, 1780.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received with much thankfulness your confidential letter of the 9th. Inst., and am greatly obliged by the affectionate expressions of personal regard which are contained in it. An unreserved communication of sentiments, accompanying such information as you are at liberty to give, will ever be pleasing to me, and cannot fail of being useful. In this light I view and value your last letter, some parts of which are new, agreeable and instructive—while that part of it which relates to the transaction at the Ct. of V——, is wonderfully astonishing.

There are two things (as I have often declared) which in my opinion, are indispensably necessary to the well being and good Government of our public affairs; these are, greater powers to Congress, and more responsibility and permanency in the executive

the city. One of the boats was forced nearly down to Sandy Hook. Another got ashore on Staten Island. They were all at length taken to Brunswic, whence Colonel Humphreys and his party returned to the army. The details of this attempt were communicated by a "general officer" to a British spy, who gave them to the British early in February.—*Magazine of American History*, x., 413, 414.

bodies. If individual States conceive themselves at liberty to reject, or alter any act of Congress, which in a full representation of them has been solemnly debated, and decided on; it will be madness in us, to think of prosecuting the war. And if Congress suppose, that Boards composed of their own body, and always fluctuating, are competent to the great business of war, (which requires not only close application, but a constant and uniform train of thinking and acting), they will most assuredly deceive themselves. Many, many instances might be adduced in proof of this, but to a mind as observant as yours, there is no need to enumerate them. One, however, as we *feelingly* experience it, I shall name. It is the want of cloathing, when I have every reason to be convinced that the expence which the Public is run to in this article would cloath our army as well as any troops in Europe—in place of it we have enumerable objects of distressing want.

Necessity alone can justify the present mode of obtaining supplies, for besides the hazard and difficulty we meet with in procuring them, I am well convinced, that the public is charged with double what it receives, and what it receives is doubly charged, so expensive and precarious is the present system. When the army marched [*illegible*] for winter Quarters, I visited the Hospitals and back communication from Pensa. to this place. In the neighborhood of Pittstown I fell in with a parcel of cattle that were going to be slaughtered and salted, and can assure you upon my honor, that besides being immensely poor, they were

so small that I am convinced they would not average 175 lbs. the 4 nett quarters—some could not exceed one hundd. weight, and others were mere calves. These pass by the head, and the State or States that furnish them, will have the reputation of supplying that number of merchantable bullocks, when the fact is that next summer a starving man would scarce eat the beef they were about to put up) after the salt had extracted the little fat and juice that were in it. There were about 100 in the drove I saw, and my information extended to about 8 or 900 more of the same kind, in the neighborhood. I directed the Commissary to select the *best* for salting, and let the others be eaten fresh, as it would be a waste of salt, barrels, and time to put it up. I relate this as a matter coming under my own observation. Many other instances of a similar nature might be given from information, but I avoid it.

This letter will accompany one to Congress on the subject of promotion. That of lineal, instead of regimental, I am perswaded, as well from the opinions I have heard, as from the reason and the nature of the thing, will be the most consistent with justice, and most pleasing to each state line. With respect to the rise of Colonels and promotion of General officers, I have no wish to gratify, except that which I have expressed in my public letter, of fixing some principle to avoid discontent and the consequences which flow from it. Irregular promotion, unless there is obvious cause for it, is not only injurious in any service, but in ours is derogatory of the dignity of

Congress, for the officer who is superceded, and afterwards restored, is hurt by the first act, and does not feel himself obliged by the latter (considering it as an act of justice only); while the two acts stand as an undeniable proof on record, that there is an established principle wanting, or that there is a want of information, or a want of firmness in Congress to resist importunity, because the restoring act, as I have observed, is an incontestable proof of one or the other of these three things.

At present we are in no want of Major Generals—in this part of the army at least. But while I am on the subject of promotion, and while the thing is in my mind, I will beg leave to mention, that if at any time hereafter there should be a brigadier junior to Gen'l Knox promoted before him, he will be lost to the service, tho' he should thereafter be restored to his place. I mention it because under the idea of State promotion he can never rise, and because I am well perswaded that the want of him at the head of the artillery, would be irrepairable. * * *

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 26 December, 1780.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Since my letter of the 14th Instt. by Majr. Franks (for the Post once a Week & travellers accidentally —are all the conveyances I have) your favors of the 16th & 19th are both come to hand.

My sentiments, respecting your serving in the South-

ern Army this winter, were fully, though concisely, explained in my last. If I were to add aught to the opinion therein given, it should be to wait, (as we are hourly expecting it,) something more explicit from France. It is impossible for us to remain much longer in uncertainty, with respect to the second division of French troops. Vessels daily arriving from that Kingdom, tho' they may not bring us official advices, must realize or destroy our hope of an early succor. In a letter, which came to my hands a few days ago from Count de Rochambeau, dated at Boston the 13th Instt., are these words.

"On arriving at this place, I found very interesting news, brought by an american Vessel, which left the river of Nantz on the 4th of Novr. She has given me the annexed list of vessels, which are coming from Brest, destined for America, with a convoy which is preparing at Brest. She tells me, that there is a change in our Ministry; that Mr. Sartine retires, and that Monsr. de Castries succeeds him; that the Mars, an American vessel of twenty guns, would depart a little while after her, charged with despatches for us. Although there is something extraordinary in all this news, it appears to me so circumstantial, that it gives an air of truth to what regards the armament." He adds, that "all the other vessels had rejoined the Spaniards at Cadiz, to attempt the reduction of Gibraltar, which was short of Provisions."

I have received no letter yet from the Count, in answer to mine respecting the Expedition of the Spaniards to the Southward. The Chevr. de Ternay, to whom my letter was equally addressed, is dead, as you will have learnt from the despatches, which I forwarded to the Minister a few days ago. If circumstances, which you can easier explain than I

conjecture, should make a visit from me to Rhode Island necessary, I certainly should be most happy in your company. But do not let this influence your determinations.[1]

The light Infantry and Grenadiers, who were under orders for Embarkation at New York, and had actu-

[1] Lafayette abandoned his idea of going to the south, which will be explained by the following extracts from his letters:

"I most heartily thank you for the kind and friendly letters you have been pleased to send me. I am so happy in your friendship, that every mark of your affection for me gives me a degree of pleasure greater than I can express. There is intelligence of ships and troops having been put in readiness at Brest. A Spanish officer may possibly wait on you to concert a coöperation. We are also to expect news from my friend the new minister of the French navy, and before they arrive you would not like my departure. Two other reasons also have weight with me. First, if the enemy make this detachment, without which nothing material will happen in the south, and if the intelligence be true about the fast recruiting of the six months' men, something may possibly be done in this quarter. Secondly, for reasons, which I will explain to you when we meet, a visit from you to the French army is much to be wished, and in this case you will be glad, that I may accompany you."—*Philadelphia*, December 16th.

"Colonel Laurens having been appointed to go to France and solicit succors for the next campaign, he has also been directed to take your orders at head-quarters. I am by order of Congress to have a conference with him, and I intend giving him many letters for France. As, in giving your instructions to Laurens, the presence of one who knows the people may be agreeable to you, I shall set out for head-quarters on Friday or Saturday morning."—December 26th.

In a letter from Colonel Laurens himself, this subject is mentioned as follows:—"Your Excellency will be not a little surprised to learn, that Congress have been determined to send me to France, for the special purpose of representing the present state of our affairs and soliciting the necessary succours. I was in great hopes, that Congress would have availed themselves of the abilities of Colonel Hamilton for these important objects, and that I should have been suffered to persevere in a line of duty, to which I feel myself more adequate. But, unfortunately for America, Colonel Hamilton was not sufficiently known to Congress to unite their suffrages in his favor, and I was assured that there remained no other alternative than the total failure of the business. Thus circumstanced, I was induced to submit, and renounce my plan of participating in the southern campaign."—*Philadelphia*, December 23d.

ally prepared for it, were countermanded, and other Troops sent in their place ; but whether Knyphausen goes or not, since this change has taken place, I am not able to say. A confirmation of the British Fleet in the Channel having suffered by a storm, and of the African Princes having excluded the British arm'd vessels from their ports, as also of Tarleton's defeat, would be most welcomely recd. I had the pleasure of the Chevr. de Chastelleaux's company on his way to Albany ; but the Viscount de Noailles and Count Damas passed on the other side of the river without calling. Mrs. Washington & Tilghman, (who is the only person of my family, that is with me at present) join in best wishes to you.—Please make an offering of my respectful complimts. to the Chevr. de la Luzerne & Mr. Marbois & believe me to be, as I really am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 28 December, 1780.

Your Excellency's favor of the 13th reached me this day. I have ever been of opinion, that the reduction of the post of Detroit would be the only certain means of giving peace and security to the whole western frontier, and I have constantly kept my eye upon that object ; but, such has been the reduced state of our Continental force, and such the low ebb of our funds, especially of late, that I have never had it in my power to make the attempt. I shall think it a most happy circumstance, should your State, with the aid

of Continental stores which you require, be able to accomplish it. I am so well convinced of the general public utility with which the expedition, if successful, will be attended, that I do not hesitate a moment in giving directions to the commandant at Fort Pitt to deliver to Colonel Clark the articles which you request, or so many of them as he may be able to furnish. I have also directed him to form such a detachment of Continental troops as he can safely spare, and put them under the command of Colonel Clark. There is a Continental company of artillery at Fort Pitt, which I have likewise ordered upon the expedition, should it be prosecuted. The officers of this company will be competent to the management of the mortar and howitzers.

I do not know for what particular purpose Colonel Clark may want the six-pound cannon; but, if he expects to derive advantage from them in the reduction of works of any strength, he will find himself disappointed. They are not equal to battering a common log blockhouse, at the shortest range. This we have found upon experience. I would therefore advise him to consider this point, and leave them behind, except he sees a probability of wanting them in the field. I have enclosed the letter for Colonel Brodhead commanding at Fort Pitt, which Colonel Clark may deliver whenever he sees fit. It is possible, that some advantage may arise from keeping the true destination of the expedition a secret as long as circumstances will admit. If so, the fewer who are entrusted the better.

Since I began this letter I have been furnished by Genl. Knox, commanding officer of the Artillery, and by the Qr. Mr. Genl. with Returns of the stores in their several departments which are at Fort Pitt, and I find they fall very far short of your Excellency's requisition. I have therefore formed my order to Colo. Brodhead in proportion to the stock in his hands.[1] There is no mortar at Fort Pitt, but the 8 Inch Howitzer will answer the purpose, and is more convenient for transportation. The [*mutilated*] two of each.

The matter, which the house of delegates have referred to my determination, stands thus. A board of general officers in the year 1778 determined, that officers bearing Continental commissions should take

[1] "Your good sense will, I am convinced, make you view this matter in its true light. The inability of the Continent to undertake the reduction of Detroit, which, while in continues in possession of the enemy, will be a constant source of trouble to the whole Western frontier, has of necessity imposed the task upon the State of Virginia, and of consequence makes it expedient to confer the command upon an officer of the State. This being the case, I do not think the charge of the enterprise could have been committed to better hands than Colo. Clark's. I have not the pleasure of knowing the Gentleman; but, independent of the proofs he has given of his activity and address, the unbounded confidence, which I am told the Western people repose in him, is a matter of vast importance; as I imagine a considerable part of his force will consist of Volunteers and Militia, who are not to be governed by military laws, but must be held by the ties of confidence and affection to their leader.

"I shall conclude with recommending to you, in general, to give every countenance and assistance to this enterprise, should no circumstances intervene to prevent its execution. One thing you may rest assured of, and that is, that, while offensive operations are going forwd. against Detroit and the Indians in alliance with the British in that quarter, your Posts with small Garrisons in them and proper vigilance will be perfectly secure. For this reason, and the expedition depending upon the supplies here reqd., I shall expect a punctual compliance with this order, and am, with real esteem and regard, &c."—*Washington to Colonel Brodhead*, 29 December, 1780.

rank of those having State commissions only while their regiments continued upon a State establishment; but that, when such regiments became Continental, the officers should be entitled to receive Continental commissions from the date of their State appointments. Thus you see, it is not in my power to recommend them to Congress for Continental commissions, while in State regiments, without infringing an established rule. As to the second point, "Whether such officers shall take promotion in the line, or be confined to the said two regiments," I think that they had best, for the sake of peace and harmony, be confined to the two regiments. For many of those officers left the Continental line in very low ranks, and obtained very high in that of the State. This created much uneasiness when the troops came together in service; and it was with difficulty that many of the Continental officers could be made to brook being commanded by those, who had been their inferiors the preceding campaign. I am therefore of opinion, that an attempt to introduce those gentlemen now into the Continental line would create a source of infinite discontent and uneasiness, more especially as you have a sufficient number of officers, at home and in captivity (and vacancies ought in justice to be reserved for such of the latter as wish to serve again), for the quota of Continental troops assigned to the State by the last establishment. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] "The Honble. the Congress having, in order to remove all cause of jealousy and discontent between the States of Pennsylvania and Connecticut, directed

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 2 January, 1781.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of the 21st ulto., in which Congress have been pleased to refer the propriety of granting Genl. Stark's request to them, to me. His health is undoubtedly so much impaired, that he has been able to do but very little duty the preceding Campaign, and retirement for a time seems therefore necessary. Congress will either direct his return to the Army at a certain period, or they will leave it at large, as they may judge proper. I beg leave to call the attention of Congress to my letter, of the 28th Novemr. last from Morris Town in which I mentioned Colo. Scammell's desire to quit the Office of Adjutant-General. I had not at that time his letter on the subject with me. I now enclose a Copy of it, in which his reasons for wishing to return to the line are fully set forth. I find him still determined in his resolution, and I shall therefore, I hope, be excused for pressing Congress to appoint a successor.

I have at length, thro' a Channel on which I can

me to withdraw the present Garrison of Wyoming, and to replace them with troops from the Continental Army, not belonging to the line of Pennsylvania or Connecticut, or Citizens of either of the said States, I have for that purpose ordered Capt. Mitchell of the Jersey line to relieve you. You will, therefore, upon his arrival, deliver up the post to him, and march immediately with all the men at present under your command and join the Army in the neighborhood of this place. . . . You will, before you march, give Captain Mitchell every necessary information respecting the situation of the Country, and make him acquainted with those characters, upon whom he can depend for advice and intelligence, in case of an incursion of the Enemy."—*Washington to Colonel Zebulon Butler*, 29 December, 1780.

depend, gained an account, as accurate as circumstances will admit, of the embarkation which sailed from New York on the 20th ulto. It consisted of about sixteen hundred Men, and was chiefly composed of detachments from the British, German, and provincial Corps. The Queen's Rangers are said to be the only intire Corps. Arnold commands, which, my informant says, gives disgust to many of the other officers. The destination was not reduced to a certainty, but from the preparations, and the Refugees who embarked in the fleet, it was generally thought to be to the southward. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] In consequence of the memorable defeat of the British detachment under Colonel Ferguson at King's Mountain, Lord Rawdon, by order of Lord Cornwallis, wrote to General Leslie, then in the Chesapeake, suggesting the expediency of his advancing to North Carolina. "No force has presented itself to us," said Lord Rawdon, "whose opposition could be thought serious to this army; but then we have little hopes of ever bringing the affair to an action. The enemy are mostly mounted militia, not to be overtaken by our infantry, nor to be safely pursued in this strong country by our cavalry. Our fear is, that, instead of meeting us, they would slip by us into this province were we to proceed far from it, and might again stimulate the disaffected to serious insurrection. This apprehension must greatly circumscribe our efforts."—*Lord Rawdon to General Leslie*, October 24th. For these reasons a speedy co-operation was desired, but not ordered. It was left wholly to the discretion of General Leslie, who, on receiving this letter, resolved to move as soon as possible by water to Cape Fear River. That his purpose might be unsuspected, he engaged pilots for James River, and nobody but himself and two officers were entrusted with the secret of his destination. He left the Chesapeake on the 24th of November, and went to sea. He did not stop at Cape Fear, as he at first proposed, but arrived in Charleston on the 13th of December, after a tempestuous voyage; and marched thence with a large part of his force to form a junction with Lord Cornwallis.

In consequence of this movement of General Leslie, it was resolved to send another body of troops to the Chesapeake.

"This detachment," said Sir Henry Clinton in a letter to Lord George Germaine, "is under the command of General Arnold, with whom I thought it right to send Colonels Dundas and Simcoe, as being officers of experience and much

P. S. Capt. Mitchell of the Jersey line has marched with a Company to relieve Colo. Butler at Wyoming.[1]

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

MY DEAR SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 3 January, 1781.

I, to-day, at Noon recd. yours of the 2d in the morning by Majr. Fishbourn who has given me a full account of the unhappy and alarming defection of the Pennsylvania line. The officers have given convincing proofs, that every thing possible was done by them to check the mutiny upon its first appearance, and it is to be regretted, that some of them have fallen sacrifices to their zeal. I very much approve of

in my confidence. The objects of this expedition are nearly the same as those of the one under Major-General Leslie, but rather more positive as to the establishment of a post at Portsmouth on the Elizabeth River. I have also directed General Arnold to prepare materials for building a number of boats, that we may, as soon as possible, have a naval force in Albemarle Sound, which force, when the season is too far advanced for it to act in those waters, may be employed to great advantage in the rivers of the Chesapeake."—*MS. Letter*, December 16, 1780.

The expedition consisted of sixteen hundred and nine effectives. A severe gale separated the fleet on the 26th and 27th of December, but a reunion was effected at the Capes of the Chesapeake, and the fleet entered Hampton Roads on the 30th, except three transports and one armed vessel, with upwards of four hundred men on board. These arrived on the 4th of January. Half of the cavalry horses were lost, and several guns were thrown overboard. Arnold was instructed to strike at the magazines of the Americans, should an opportunity of doing it without risk offer itself; and to assemble and arm the loyalists, but not to encourage any to join him, till there was the fairest prospect of protecting them. In all cases Arnold was to consult Dundas and Simcoe, before undertaking any important measure. He was to co-operate with Lord Cornwallis, should it be the united opinion of those two officers, or should he receive a positive order from Lord Cornwallis to that effect. The whole tenor of the instructions shows a distrust of Arnold, and a strict watchfulness over his conduct.—*Sparks*.

[1] Read in Congress, January 8th.

the determination of yourself, Colo. Richard Butler, and Colo. Walter Stewart, to keep with the troops, if they will admit of it, as, after the first transports of passion, there may be some favorable intervals, which may be improved. I do not know where this may find you or in what situation. I can therefore only advise what seems to me most proper at this distance, and upon a consideration of all circumstances.

Opposition, as it did not succeed in the first instance, cannot be effectual while the men remain together, but will keep alive resentment, and may tempt them to turn about and go in a body to the Enemy, who, by their emissaries, will use every argument and mean in their power to persuade them that it is their only asylum ; which, if they find their passage stopped at the Delaware, and hear that the Jersey militia are collecting in their rear, they may think but too probable. I would therefore recommend it to you to cross the Delaware with them, draw from them what they conceive to be their principal grievances, and promise faithfully to represent to Congress and to the State the substance of them, and to endeavor to obtain a redress. If they could be stopped at Bristol or G. T. the better. I look upon it, that if you can bring them to a negotiation, matters may be afterwards accommodated ; but that an attempt to reduce them by force will either drive them to the Enemy, or dissipate them in such a manner, that they will never be recovered.[1] Major

[1] On January 6th, Clinton, who received intelligence of the revolt at the same hour as Washington, sent about five thousand men, under the command of General Robertson, to Staten Island, to receive and protect the mutineers should they seek to join the British.

Fishbourn informs me, that Genl. Potter and Colo. Johnston had gone forward to apprize Congress of this unfortunate event, and to advise them to go out of the way to avoid the first burst of the Storm. It was exceedingly proper to give Congress and the State notice of the affair, that they might be prepared; but the removal of Congress, waving the indignity, might have a very unhappy influence. The Mutineers, finding the Body before whom they were determined to lay their grievances fled, might take a new turn and wreak their vengeance upon the persons and property of the Citizens; and, in a town of the size of Philada., there are numbers who would join them in such a business. I would therefore wish you, if you have time, to recall that advice, and rather recommend it to them to wait and hear what propositions the Soldiers have to make.

Immediately upon the receipt of your letter, I took measures to inform myself of the temper of the troops in this quarter, and have sent into the Country for a small Escort of Horse to come to me; and if nothing alarming appears here, and I hear nothing farther from you, I shall to-morrow morning set out towards Philadelphia, by the Route of Chester, Warwick, Colonel Seward's, Davenport's Mill, Morristown, Somerset, Princeton, Trenton, on which route you will direct any despatches for me. As I shall be exceedingly anxious to hear what turn matters have taken, or in what situation they remain, you will be pleased to let me hear from you. I am, &c.[1]

[1] The Pennsylvania line, by the new arrangement of the army, had been reduced from eleven to six regiments. These were stationed for the winter in

P. S. *January 4th, seven o'clock*, A. M. — Upon second thoughts I am in doubt whether I shall come down, because the Mutineers must have returned to

the huts near Morristown, which had been occupied by the army as winter-quarters the preceding year. The regiments were under the immediate command of General Wayne, who wrote as follows in the letter of which Major Fishbourn was the bearer.

"A most general and unhappy mutiny suddenly took place in the Pennsylvania line about nine o'clock last night. A great proportion of the troops, with some artillery, are marching towards Philadelphia. Every exertion has been made by the officers to divide them in their determination to revolt. It has succeeded in a temporary manner with near one half. How long it will last, God knows.

"I have ordered the Jersey brigade to Chatham, where the militia are also assembling, lest the enemy should take advantage of this alarming crisis. Indeed, the alarm-guns have been fired, and the beacons kindled towards Elizabethtown ; perhaps occasioned by our unhappy affair. I am this moment, with Colonels Butler and Stewart, taking horse to try to halt them on their march towards Princeton. As a last resort, I am advised to collect them, and move slowly towards Pennsylvania. What their temper may be, I cannot tell. We had an escape last night. Perhaps we may be equally fortunate to-day. Captain Billings is killed ; Captain Talbot mortally wounded ; some others are also hurt."—January 2d, nine o'clock A.M.

General Wayne overtook the mutineers the same day on their march towards Princeton. He was advised not to go among them ; but, when they halted for the night, he sent to them and requested that one sergeant or more from each regiment should be delegated to meet at his quarters, and make known their grievances. This was done, and among the others came a sergeant, one Williams, a "poor creature or fond of liquor," and a deserter from the British, having been taken prisoner at Princeton, enlisted in De Lancey's battalion, and deserted at Kingsbridge, whom the mutineers had chosen to be their commander. Their complaints were, that many soldiers had been detained beyond the term of their enlistment ; that the arrearages of pay and the depreciation had not been made up ; and that they were suffering every privation for want of money and clothes. A mode of redress was pointed out by General Wayne and the Colonels, which seemed to satisfy the delegated sergeants, and they agreed to use their efforts to bring over the minds of the others. But the attempt was ineffectual, and they all marched the next day, January 4th, to Princeton. Those who were well disposed, and willing to separate from the mutineers, were requested by the officers to march in the same body, as it was hoped their presence and influence might serve to moderate the violence of the leaders, and check the contagion of their example.—*Sparks.*

their duty, or the business be in the hands of Congress, before I could reach you, and because I am advised by such of the General Officers, as I have seen, not to leave this post in the present situation of things, temper of the troops, and distress of the Garrison for want of Flour, Cloathing, and in short every thing.

TO THE NEW ENGLAND STATES.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
5 January, 1781.

SIR,

It is with extreme anxiety and pain of mind, I find myself constrained to inform you, that the event I have long apprehended would be the consequence of the complicated distresses of the Army, has at length taken place.—On the night of the 1st instant, a mutiny was excited by the non-commissioned officers and privates of the Pennsylvania line, which soon became so universal as to defy all opposition. In attempting to quell this tumult in the first instance, some officers were killed, others wounded, and the lives of several common soldiers lost. Deaf to the arguments, entreaties, and utmost efforts of *all their officers*, to stop them, the men moved off from Morristown, the place of their cantonment, with their arms, and six pieces of Artillery: and from accounts just received by General Wayne's Aid de Camp, they were still in a body, on their march to Philadelphia, to demand a redress of their grievances. At what point this defection will stop, or how extensive it may prove, God only knows; at present the troops at the important posts in this vicinity remain quiet, not being acquainted with this unhappy and alarming affair. How long they will continue so, cannot be ascertained, as they labor under some of the pressing hardships with the troops who have revolted.

The aggravated calamities and distresses that have resulted from the total want of pay, for nearly twelve months, the want of cloathing at a severe season, and not unfrequently the want of

provisions, are beyond description. The circumstances will now point out much more forcibly what ought to be done, than any thing that can possibly be said by me, on the subject.

It is not within the sphere of my duty to make requisitions without the authority of Congress from individual states; but at such a crisis as this, and circumstanced as we are, my own heart will acquit me, and Congress and the States (eastward of this) whom, for the sake of despatch, I address, I am persuaded will excuse me when once for all I give it decidedly as my opinion, that it is vain to think an army can be kept together much longer, under such a variety of sufferings as ours has experienced; and that unless some immediate and spirited measures are adopted to furnish at least three months pay to the troops, in money which will be of some value to them—and at the same time ways and means are devised to clothe and feed them better (more regularly I mean), than they have been—the worst that can befall us may be expected.

I have transmitted Congress a copy of this letter, and have in the most pressing terms requested them to adopt the measure which I have above recommended, or something similar to it, and as I will not doubt of their compliance, I have thought it proper to give you this previous notice, that you may be prepared to answer the requisition.

As I have used every endeavor in my power to avert the evil that has come upon us, so will I continue to exert every mean I am possessed of, to prevent an extension of the mischief, but I can neither foretell or be answerable for the issue.

That you may have every information that an officer of rank and abilities can give, of the true situation of our affairs, and the condition and temper of the troops, I have prevailed upon Brigadier General Knox to be the bearer of this letter; to him I beg leave to refer you, for many matters, which would be too tedious for a letter.[1]

[1] "You will proceed with the despatches, with which you are charged, to the governors of the States of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and to the president of New Hampshire. You are acquainted with the subject of those despatches, in which the Gentlemen to whom they are addressed are referred to you for more particular account of the situation of the Army, the

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
6 January, 1781.

SIR,

Congress must have been long ere this, informed by General Wayne of the Mutiny of the Pennsylvania Troops on the 1st instant, and I have no doubt

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causes of discontent in it, and the probable means of giving satisfaction to the Soldiery. Upon the first two heads, you have no need of any instructions. What seems to me most essentially necessary to answer the end of the third, is an immediate supply of Money and Cloathing; of the first a sum equal to three months' pay at least of the new emission, or some other of equal value; of the last a compleat Suit of Clothes, not only for the Men now in service, but for the number of Recruits who are to join.

"That you may be able to speak fully upon the Article of Cloathing, I will inform you minutely of our present supply and future prospects. The few Men, who remain in service, will with difficulty find a sufficiency of Shirts, Vests, Breeches, and Stockings to carry them thro' the winter. Of Coats we are very deficient. When those which are in the hands of the Agents are brought forward, there will not be more than one third of what are wanting. Thus you perceive, that the old Soldiers will have occasion for a full supply of Cloathing when they take the field, and that the Recruits, except they are furnished by their respective States, must be absolutely destitute. We may obtain some supplies from France between this time and the Spring, but we have been so often disappointed from that quarter, that prudence dictates the impolicy of placing dependence upon it.

"I have been speaking of the Northern Army only. General Greene represents the southern as literally naked, and therefore, should there be an arrival from Europe, a great part must be applied to that Army, as the southern States have not resources within them. I have hitherto only spoken of a sum of money equal to three months' pay; but it is possible that a further sum may be necessary, and that of specie, to give new Bounties to those Soldiers, who were early enlisted for the War upon very low terms. There can no ill result from securing such a fund; for, if it should not be wanted for that purpose, it may be applied usefully to a thousand others."—*Instructions to Brigadier-General Knox*, 7 January, 1781.

On the representations made by General Knox, the legislatures of Massachusetts and New Hampshire voted to send forward immediately to the army a gratuity of twenty-four dollars in hard money for each of the non-commissioned officers and soldiers belonging to those States, who were engaged to serve during the war.

but he has kept them regularly advised of what happened afterwards. I have heard nothing particular from those troops since they reached the neighborhood of Somerset Court House, at which place they shewed some signs of a better disposition than at first. The only favorable circumstance is, their not having attempted to make a push for the Enemy. I should have immediately, upon the receipt of this alarming intelligence, proceeded to Morristown, and from thence to wherever the troops might be, had matters been in such a situation here, as to have justified my leaving these important posts, without being well assured of the temper and affections of the Garrison, who labor under nearly the same distresses, and have in some degree the same cause of complaint as the Pennsylvanians, and, more especially as the Officers had, a little time ago, acquainted me, that they had discovered some symptoms of a similar intention. Luckily, however, no such disposition has yet appeared. But as the distresses of the Troops for Flour and for some species of Cloathing are great, and they may only want some plausible pretext for breaking out, I am strongly advised by the General Officers present, not to leave this place, particularly as the River is intirely free of Ice, and therefore favorable for the enemy to take advantage of such an event should it unfortunately happen.

General Wayne, Colo. R. Butler and Colo. Stewart will keep with the Line, and as they are extremely popular officers, they will I think have every possible effect upon the Men. I wrote to General Wayne upon the subject of what appeared to me the proper

mode of conducting himself and desired him to forward a copy of my letter to Congress.

I every moment expect further intelligence from below, and should matters seem indispensably to require my presence I will set out. His Excelly. Govr. Clinton is here, and will remain in the neighborhood, ready to call in his Militia should there be any defection in the Continental Troops.

I do myself the honor to enclose the Copy of a letter which I have written to the four Eastern States, preparatory to the requisition, which I most earnestly intreat Congress may make upon them and the others for an advance of pay and supplies, if the public funds are not in condition to furnish what is necessary for the purpose. Matters are now come to a Crisis, and I should be wanting in duty to my Country, and unworthy of that confidence which Congress have been pleased in so many instances to repose in me were I to hesitate in giving it as my opinion that altho' the other troops, who are more generally composed of Natives, and may therefore have attachments of a stronger nature, may bear their distresses somewhat longer than the Pennsylvanians, yet, that it will be dangerous to put their patience further to the test. They may, for what I know, be only waiting to see the effects of the Pennsylvania insurrection ; and it will be therefore far better to meet them with a part of their just dues, than to put them to the necessity of demanding them in a manner disreputable and prejudicial to the service, and the Cause, and totally subversive of all military discipline. * * *[1]

[1] Read in Congress, January 15th.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WAYNE.

NEW WINDSOR, 8 January, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 4th with the enclosures by the Express the Evening before last. I had been deliberating in my own mind, whether to continue at this place or set out for Prince Town; but am advised by the Governor of this State, and the General Officers with me, (and which seems to be consonant to your opinion also,) to remain here, as the ultimate measures might probably be taken before I could arrive; and as the personal influence of yourself and the Gentlemen with you, together with that of the Governor and Council of the State, might effect whatever could be done in that way.

I am now happy to inform you, the Troops at the several Posts in this vicinity continue still quiet, without giving indications of outrage or defection. At this distance, and under your present circumstances, it is impossible to recommend (if advice could reach you in time) any particular line of conduct, but only in general to observe, that such measures founded in justice, and a proper degree of generosity, as will have a tendency to conciliate or divide the men, appear most likely to succeed. Certain it is, that, should they finally *be driven* to the Enemy, they will be a considerable augmentation of strength against us; or, should they be dispersed, their loss to the service will be severely felt. Both these evils are therefore to be avoided, if there is any proper ground on which it can be done. The circumstances of the moment will

point out the measures necessary to be pursued, taking into view at the same time the consequences which will be involved, with respect to other Troops, who are nearly in the same situation.

I have such entire confidence in the zeal, ability, and influence of the Gentlemen concerned in the negotiation; let the issue be what it may, I shall have the consolation of believing, that whatever could be done on the occasion has been faithfully and strenuously attempted. I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] When the news of the revolt reached Philadelphia, a committee was appointed by Congress, at six o'clock on January 3d, consisting of General Sullivan, Mr. Witherspoon, and Mr. Mathews, who were instructed to confer with the executive of Pennsylvania on the subject. This committee, and Governor Reed on the part of the Council of Pennsylvania, set off to meet the troops. On the 5th Mr. Bland and Mr. Atlee were added to the congressional committee. Meantime General Wayne remained with them at Princeton. It was ascertained that overtures were about to be made to the insurgents by the enemy, to which it was feared they would listen, and for two or three days the officers were in a state of extreme anxiety. They were somewhat relieved by an incident, which is thus related in a letter from General Wayne:

"About four o'clock yesterday morning we were waked by two sergeants, who produced a letter from the enemy, enclosed in a small piece of *tea-lead*. They also brought under guard two caitiffs, who undertook to deliver it to the leaders of the malecontents. One of these culprits says he is a sergeant in Odell's newly raised corps, and was promised a considerable reward on bringing back an answer. The soldiers in general affect to spurn at the idea of turning *Arnolds*, as they express it. We have used every address to inflame their minds against wretches, who would dare to insult them by imagining them traitors; for, had they thought them virtuous, they would not have carried those overtures."—*Princeton*, January 8th. The "two caitiffs" were John Mason and James Ogden (of South River). Clinton's message, addressed "to the person appointed by the Pennsylvania Line to lead them in their present struggle for their liberty and rights," offered the protection of the British Government, a free pardon for all former offences, and the pay that was due them by Congress, without expectation of military service.

Governor Reed arrived at Princeton, and the committee of Congress at Trenton. The following proposals were offered to the mutineers:

"1. To discharge all those, who had enlisted *indefinitely* for three years, or

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
9 January, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been duly favored with your letters of the 7th and 8th of Decr., together with the returns of the army under your command.

It is impossible for any one to sympathize more feelingly with you, in the sufferings and distresses of the troops, than I do; and nothing could aggravate my unhappiness so much as the want of ability to remedy or even alleviate the calamities, which they suffer, and in which we participate but too largely. None of the clothing so long expected from France has yet arrived. We are compelled therefore to have recourse to the States, and the supplies are very inadequate to our wants. Should the French clothing be brought in, you may depend upon having a full proportion of it. You will be persuaded in the mean time, that I am perfectly sensible of the innumerable embarrassments and hardships you have to struggle

during the war; the fact to be inquired into by three commissioners to be appointed by the executive, and to be ascertained, where the original enlistment could not be produced, by the oath of the soldier.

"2. To give immediate certificates for the depreciation on their pay, and to settle averages as soon as circumstances would admit.

"3. To furnish them immediately with certain specified articles of clothing, which were greatly wanted."

These terms were accepted, and resulted in the disbanding of a very large portion of the troops, and a temporary dissolution of the line.

The emissaries, or spies, were given up, tried by a court-martial, and executed on the 11th of January. A full collection of the official papers concerning the revolt of the Pennsylvania line is published in the second volume of Hazard's *Register of Pennsylvania*. See also Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. iv., pp. 393–403.—Sir Henry Clinton's statement of the affair may be found in the *Remembrancer*, vol. xi., p. 148.

with, in such an exhausted country, and that I should be happy to be able to afford the wished relief. The brilliant action of General Sumpter, and the stratagem of Colonel Washington, deserve great commendation. It gives me inexpressible pleasure to find, that such a spirit of enterprise and intrepidity still prevails.

I was much surprised, that any dispute about rank was like to arise between Baron Steuben and General Smallwood; nor can I conceive upon what principles the latter can found his claim of seniority. For, if the date of his *commission* is to be carried back to any given period previous to his appointment, it may supersede not only that of the officer now in question, but many others, and indeed derange and throw into confusion the rank of the whole line of major-generals. But as the services of the Baron may be extremely necessary in Virginia, it may not be amiss for him to continue there, till the principles of Major-General Smallwood on the subject are more clearly ascertained, and a decision is made by Congress, if the dispute cannot be otherwise determined.

The preposterous conduct of those concerned in releasing, instead of exchanging, the prisoners lately taken to the southward, is really astonishing. I had entertained hopes, that a considerable number of our prisoners in Charlestown might have been obtained for them. In this quarter an extensive exchange has taken place. We have few officers and no privates remaining in the hands of the enemy. I advised you on the 2nd inst. of the sailing of a fleet from N. York, with about 1600 troops on board, nothing has been heard respecting it since. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
12 January, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

The receipt of your letter of the 9th, enclosing one from General Wayne, has, if possible, added to my embarrassments. I had heard from General Sullivan and Lord Stirling, that the mutineers had delivered up the British emissaries immediately upon their arrival in Princeton. From this I was in hopes, that they had precluded themselves from all assistance from that quarter, and that the reduction of them by force, should matters come to extremities, would not be difficult. But now their conduct appears to me in this light; they have made known the propositions offered by Sir Henry Clinton only by way of threat, and seem to say, if you do not grant our terms, we can obtain them elsewhere.[1]

At the meeting with the general and field officers yesterday, it was almost a universal opinion, that their

[1] "I think it appears by the letter, which has fallen into your hands, that there has not been much if any intercourse between the mutineers and Sir Henry Clinton; and, if the future correspondence can be intercepted, it will embarrass the British and the troops. You will have been the best judge of the kind of answer, which it would be proper to give to Sir Henry's message; but as we had not force sufficient to wish to decoy him out, perhaps it will have been most prudent to answer him in the negative. I am certain, that, in consequence of my letter of the 8th to General Wayne, every offer that could with propriety be made has been made. What further is to be done can be better judged by you on the spot, than by me at a distance. The steps you have hitherto taken are judicious and strictly proper. Be pleased to thank the Marquis and Colonel Laurens for their letters, which a press of business prevents me from answering."—*Washington to St. Clair*, 10 January, 1781.

St. Clair, Lafayette, and Laurens had gone to Princeton to argue with the mutineers, but were not allowed to communicate with them, and ordered to leave the place.

men might be depended on. I therefore gave directions for a detachment of one thousand to be prepared and held in readiness.[1] If things are in a train of negotiation, as would seem to be the case from General Wayne's postscript, to move a force between Trenton and the enemy might create suspicions in the minds of the mutineers, and make them fly to the enemy for safety. I do not think it prudent to write to the committee of Congress, to Governor Reed, or to General Wayne, lest my letter should be stopped. I think, therefore, from a consideration of the subject in every light, that it will be best for you to go down to the Pennsylvania side, opposite Trenton, and send for some of the gentlemen over. There inquire minutely into the situation of affairs, and if there are no hopes of a reasonable compromise, get from them an opinion of what ought ultimately to be done. If force should be determined upon, the governors of Pennsylvania and Jersey should instantly make arrangements for bringing out as many of their militia as can be collected, while the detachment above mentioned is marching from hence, that the intercourse between Trenton and this place may be as expedi-

[1] Five battalions, four being New England troops, and the fifth made up of Hazen's corps, were drawn out on marching orders, to be commanded by Major-General Robert Howe.

"Major-General Howe applied to me yesterday for the command of the detachment. In point of right he ought to have it; but in point of policy it might be better to give it to either General Parsons or General Glover; and this I told him, but ultimately desired him to fix the matter with you, and the other two gentlemen, who might be more competent judges of the weight of my observations to him than I could be myself. Determine as you will; I shall be satisfied."—*Washington to Heath*, 12 January, 1781.

tious as possible. Desire Colonel Nelson to fix a relay of expresses from the neighborhood of Trenton to Morristown, and let the quartermaster at Morristown continue them from thence to this place.

I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN LAURENS.[2]

DEAR SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 15 January, 1781.

In compliance with your request I shall commit to writing the result of our conferences on the present

[1] In a letter from General Wayne, of the same date as the above, he says: "The conditions now made and agreed to are the joint act of the committee of Congress and the governor of Pennsylvania, to whom the former delegated their powers. The mutineers as yet hold command, but we have expectations of reclaiming it, in appearance at least, either this evening or to-morrow morning. However, I believe it will be the most advisable measure to dissolve the line, and collect it anew, as well and expeditiously as we can. The spies were executed yesterday pursuant to their sentence."—*Trenton*, January 12th.

General Heath had taken some indirect measures to ascertain the sentiments of the soldiers, as to the conduct of the Pennsylvania line, particularly of those constituting the detachment ordered to be in readiness to march. A woman was sent into one regiment to listen to the conversation of the men, and she heard them say that they would have no hand in putting down the Pennsylvanians. The representations of a sergeant had been received and credited in another case; and General Heath's steward told him that he had heard the men declare that they would not march from West Point till they were paid and clothed.

"The subject of yours of yesterday is of so delicate a nature, that I am almost afraid it will be productive of ill consequences to have it handled even by the most prudent officers, in the most cautious manner. To seem to draw into question the fidelity and firmness of the soldiers, or even to express a doubt of their obedience, may occasion such a relaxation of discipline, as would not otherwise exist. I could wish to have these matters treated with the greatest prudence by the officers, and not conversed upon before their domestics, as I am apprehensive has sometimes incautiously been practised."—*Washington to Heath*, 14 January, 1781.

[2] In conformity with the instructions from Congress to Colonel Laurens, that he should consult General Washington on the objects of his mission before his

state of American affairs, in which I have given you my ideas with that freedom and explicitness, which the objects of your commission, my entire confidence in you, and the exigency demand. To me it appears evident:

1st. That, considering the diffused population of these States, the consequent difficulty of drawing together its resources, the composition and temper of *a part* of the inhabitants, the want of a sufficient stock of national wealth as a foundation for revenue, and the almost total extinction of commerce, the efforts we have been compelled to make for carrying on the war have exceeded the natural abilities of this country, and by degrees brought it to a crisis, which renders immediate and efficacious succors from abroad indispensable to its safety.

2dly. That, notwithstanding, from the confusion always attendant on a revolution, from our having had governments to frame and every species of civil and military institutions to create, from that inexperience in affairs necessarily incident to a nation in its commencement, some errors may have been committed in the administration of our finances, to which a part

departure for France, he proceeded to head-quarters for that purpose. The substance of their consultations was embodied in the form of a letter, which it was intended Colonel Laurens should use in such a manner as he might think proper. He introduced copious extracts from it into a memorial, which he presented to Count de Vergennes, and which is contained in the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, vol. ix., p. 211. Those extracts differ in some slight particulars from the copy here printed, which is taken from General Washington's letter-books. The original letter, in the handwriting of General Washington, was likewise sent to Count de Vergennes, by Colonel Laurens or Dr. Franklin, and is still preserved among the American Papers in the Archives of Foreign Affairs in Paris.—*Sparks*.

of our embarrassments are to be attributed; yet they are principally to be ascribed to an essential defect of means, to the want of a sufficient stock of wealth, as mentioned in the first article, which, continuing to operate, will make it impossible by any merely interior exertions to extricate ourselves from those embarrassments, restore public credit, and furnish the funds requisite for the support of the war.

3dly. That experience has demonstrated the impracticability long to maintain a paper credit without funds for its redemption. The depreciation of our currency was in the main a necessary effect of the want of those funds; and its restoration is impossible for the same reason, to which the general diffidence that has taken place among the people is an additional and, in the present state of things, an insuperable obstacle.

4thly. That the mode, which for want of money has been substituted for supplying the army, by assessing a proportion of the productions of the earth, has hitherto been found ineffectual, has frequently exposed the army to the most calamitous distress, and, from its novelty and incompatibility with ancient habits, is regarded by the people as burthensome and oppressive, has excited serious discontents, and in some places alarming symptoms of opposition. This mode has, besides, many particular inconveniences, which contribute to make it inadequate to our wants, and ineligible but as an auxiliary.

5thly. That, from the best estimates of the annual expense of the war and the annual revenues which

these States are capable of affording, there is a large balance to be supplied by public credit. The resource of domestic loans is inconsiderable, because there are properly speaking few moneyed men, and the few there are can employ their money more profitably otherwise ; added to which, the instability of the currency and the deficiency of funds have impaired the public credit.

6thly. That the patience of the army, from an almost uninterrupted series of complicated distress, is now nearly exhausted, and their discontents matured to an extremity, which has recently had very disagreeable consequences, and which demonstrates the absolute necessity of speedy relief, a relief not within the compass of our means. You are too well acquainted with all their sufferings for want of clothing, for want of provisions, for want of pay.

7thly. That, the people being dissatisfied with the mode of supporting the war, there is cause to apprehend, that evils actually felt in the prosecution may weaken those sentiments which began it, founded, not on immediate sufferings, but on a speculative apprehension of future sufferings from the loss of their liberties. There is danger, that a commercial and free people, little accustomed to heavy burthens, pressed by impositions of a new and odious kind, may not make a proper allowance for the necessity of the conjuncture, and may imagine they have only exchanged one tyranny for another.

8thly. That, from all the foregoing considerations result, 1st, absolute necessity of an immediate, ample,

and efficacious succor in money, large enough to be a foundation for substantial arrangements of finance, to revive public credit, and give vigor to future operations; 2dly, the vast importance of a decided effort of the allied arms on this continent, the ensuing campaign, to effectuate once for all the great objects of the alliance, the liberty and independence of these States. Without the first we may make a feeble and expiring effort the next campaign, in all probability the period to our opposition. With it, we should be in a condition to continue the war, as long as the obstinacy of the enemy might require. The first is essential to the latter; both combined would bring the contest to a glorious issue, crown the obligations, which America already feels to the magnanimity and generosity of her ally, and perpetuate the union by all the ties of gratitude and affection, as well as mutual advantage, which alone can render it solid and indissoluble.

9thly. That, next to a loan of money, a constant naval superiority on these coasts is the object most interesting. This would instantly reduce the enemy to a difficult defensive, and, by removing all prospect of extending their acquisitions, would take away the motives for prosecuting the war. Indeed, it is not to be conceived how they could subsist a large force in this country, if we had the command of the seas, to interrupt the regular transmission of supplies from Europe. This superiority, (with an aid in money,) would enable us to convert the war into a vigorous offensive. I say nothing of the advantages to the

trade of both nations, nor how infinitely it would facilitate our supplies. With respect to us, it seems to be one of *two* deciding points; and it appears, too, to be the interest of our allies, abstracted from the immediate benefits to this country, to transfer the naval war to America. The number of ports friendly to them, hostile to the British, the materials for repairing their disabled ships, the extensive supplies towards the subsistence of their fleet, are circumstances which would give them a palpable advantage in the contest of these seas.

10thly. That an additional succor in troops would be extremely desirable. Besides a reinforcement of numbers, the excellence of French troops, that perfect discipline and order in the corps already sent, which have so happily tended to improve the respect and confidence of the people for our allies, the conciliating disposition and the zeal for the service, which distinguish every rank, sure indications of lasting harmony, —all these considerations evince the immense utility of an accession of force to the corps now here. Correspondent with these motives, the enclosed minutes of a conference between their Excellencies the Count de Rochambeau, the Chevalier de Ternay, and myself will inform you, that an augmentation to fifteen thousand men was judged expedient for the next campaign; and it has been signified to me, that an application has been made to the court of France to this effect. But if the sending so large a succor in troops should necessarily diminish the pecuniary aid, which our allies may be disposed to grant, it were preferable

to diminish the aid in men; for the same sum of money, which would transport from France and maintain here a body of troops with all the necessary apparatus, being put into our hands to be employed by us, would serve to give activity to a larger force within ourselves, and its influence would pervade the whole administration.

11thly. That no nation will have it more in its power to repay what it borrows than this. Our debts are hitherto small. The vast and valuable tracts of unlocated lands, the variety and fertility of climates and soils, the advantages of every kind which we possess for commerce, insure to this country a rapid advancement in population and prosperity, and a certainty, its independence being established, of redeeming in a short term of years the comparatively inconsiderable debts it may have occasion to contract.

That, notwithstanding the difficulties under which we labor, and the inquietudes prevailing among the people, there is still a fund of inclination and resource in the country, equal to great and continued exertions, provided we have it in our power to stop the progress of disgust, by changing the present system, and adopting another more consonant with the spirit of the nation, and more capable of activity and energy in public measures; of which a powerful succor of money must be the basis. The people are discontented; but it is with the feeble and oppressive mode of conducting the war, not with the war itself. They are not unwilling to contribute to its support, but they are un-

willing to do it in a way that renders private property precarious; a necessary consequence of the fluctuation of the national currency, and of the inability of government to perform its engagements oftentimes coercively made. A large majority are still firmly attached to the independence of these States, abhor a reunion with Great Britain, and are affectionate to the alliance with France; but this disposition cannot supply the place of means customary and essential in war, nor can we rely on its duration amidst the perplexities, oppressions, and misfortunes, that attend the want of them.

If the foregoing observations are of any use to you, I shall be happy. I wish you a safe and pleasant voyage, the full accomplishment of your mission, and a speedy return; being, with sentiments of perfect friendship, regard, and affection, dear Sir, &c.[1]

[1] In introducing Col. Laurens to Franklin, Washington wrote:

"The present infinitely critical posture of our affairs made it essential, in the opinion of Congress, to send from hence a person, who had been an eye-witness of their progress, and who was capable of placing them before the court of France in a more full and striking point of light, than was proper or even practicable by any written communication. It was also judged of great importance, that the person should be able to give a military view of them, and to enter into military details and arrangements. The choice has fallen upon Colonel Laurens, as a gentleman who unites all these advantages, and adds to them an integrity and an independence of character, which render him superior to any spirit of party.

"What I have said to him, I beg leave to repeat to you, that to me nothing appears more evident, than that the period of our opposition will very shortly arrive, if our allies cannot afford us that effectual aid, particularly in money, and in a naval superiority, which are now solicited. Colonel Laurens is so fully possessed of my ideas of our situation and wants, and has himself so thorough a knowledge of them, that I should trouble you to no purpose by enlarging. You may place entire confidence in him, and in the assurance that I am, with the warmest sentiments of respect, esteem, and regard, dear Sir, &c."

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 15 January, 1781.

SIR,

The unhappy mutiny of the non-comd. [officers] and Privates of the Pensylvania line, the perplexed state of affairs in this quarter, the distressed condition of the Troops at West Point and in the vicinity of it, on acct. of Provision and some essential articles of cloathing, combined with other embarrassments of less importance, have engrossed my whole time and attention, and must be offered as an apology for not complying sooner with the order of Congress of the 1st inst., enclosed in your Excellency's Letter of the Second, relative to the expediency of removing the French Troops to Virginia.

Congress, being no strangers to the blockade of the French Squadron at Rhode Island, must have had in contemplation a land march of the French army to the above State; to which the season, length of the way, badness of the roads, difficulty of Transportation, and possibly want of covering in a good Military position when there, the expectation of the second division, and the arrangements which are made in consequence by the French General, might be offered as weighty objections by *Auxiliary* Troops against the measure. But, as Congress have been pleased to ask my opinion of the expediency of it, I think it a duty incumbent on me to add, that it is not agreeable to the sentiments, (perhaps to the orders,) of the officers commanding the Land and Naval force at Rhode Island to separate, while the latter is awed by a

superior Marine. The experiment has already been tried.[1]

I shall act to the best of my judgment in a further exchange of prisoners; and will carry the views of Congress into effect, as far as I am able.

In my last of the 6th I communicated the reasons which prevented my departure for Morris Town upon the first information I received of the revolt of the Pensylvania line, and the contingencies on which my going thither then depended. I found, notwithstanding my utmost exertion and all the *aid* I could derive from the Governor of this State, that I could only supply the garrison from day to day with Provisions; that it was a doubtful point, tho' the Troops appeared tolerably quiet in this quarter, how far they were to be depended upon, in a serious and spirited attempt to quell others, whose declared intention was to seek redress of those grievances, of which they themselves participated, and were constantly complaining; while the propriety of weakening the Garrison, supposing the utmost reliance was to be had on them, without Provisions in the Magazine or Works, was not less questionable. On the other hand, all authority in the Officers of the Pensylvania line over their Men being at an end, and the influence of those who remained

[1] "There is a coolness between Washington and M. de Rochambeau; the dissatisfaction is on the part of the American General, ours is ignorant of the reason. He has given me orders to go with a letter from him and to inform myself of the reason for his discontent, to heal the breach if possible, or if the affair be more grave to report to him the cause."—*Fersen, to his Father*, 14 January, 1781. A letter from Rochambeau to Washington, dated 13th January introduces the Count de Charlus, son of the Marquis de Castries, but there is no hint of differences. His next is dated the 20th.

with them employed to no purpose, I was convinced that the unhappy precedent they had set, and the shock which discipline had received by the revolt, would only be increased by my appearance among them, without the means of enforcing obedience; the necessity of doing which, for the support of Military authority, was so essential as to be attempted at almost every hazard. But to choose for the best, in such perplexing circumstances I was driven to, was not very easy. Ultimately, however, I determined to prepare a detachment of a thousand men, and directed General St. Clair, (who was at Morristown,) to proceed immediately to the Committee of Congress at Trenton, and, if matters were not settled, or in their opinion in a favorable train for it, to make the ulterior arrangements for Militia with Mr. President Reed and Governor Livingston, that, with their assistance, the detachment from hence might be enabled to act effectually. Thus the matter stood when a letter from the Comee. advised me that the business was likely to be accommodated to mutual satisfaction.

It would be happy for us, and favorable to the probable operations of the next Campaign, if, instead of living chiefly upon the Supplies of this State, they and those of Jersey could be held as a kind of reserve Magazine. Proper attention has been paid to such officers of the Continental lines under my immediate command, as now are or have been prisoners with the enemy, in making the new arrangement of the army; and I have no doubt but equal regard will be had to those in the southern army. I shall write to

General Greene on this head, and will transmit to him a copy of the resolve explaining the sense of Congress on this matter. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MRS. SARAH BACHE.[2]

NEW WINDSOR, 15 January, 1781.

DEAR MADAM,

I should have done myself the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of the letter you did me the favor to write on the 26th of December, at the moment of its receipt, had not some affairs of a very unusual nature (which are too recent and notorious to require explanation), engaged my whole attention. I pray you now to be persuaded, that a sense of the patriotic exertions of yourself and the ladies, who have furnished so handsome and useful a gratuity for the army, at so critical and severe a season, will not easily be effaced, and that the value of the donation will be greatly enhanced by a consideration of the hands by which it was made and presented.

Amidst all the distresses and sufferings of the army, from whatever sources they have arisen, it must be a consolation to our *virtuous countrywomen*, that

[1] Read in Congress, January 23d.

[2] Mrs. Bache was one of the ladies who superintended the contributions in Philadelphia for the benefit of the soldiers. She wrote to General Washington: "We packed up the shirts in three boxes, and delivered them to Colonel Miles, with a request that he would send them to Trenton immediately, lest the river should close; where they now wait your Excellency's orders. There are two thousand and five in number. They would have been at camp long before this, had not the general sickness prevented. We wish them to be worn with as much pleasure as they were made."

they have never been accused of withholding their most zealous efforts to support the cause we are engaged in, and encourage those who are defending them in the field. The army do not want gratitude, nor do they misplace it in this instance.

Although the friendship of your father may oblige him to see some things through too partial a medium, yet the indulgent manner in which he is pleased to express himself respecting me is indeed very pleasing; for nothing in human life can afford a liberal mind more rational and exquisite satisfaction, than the approbation of a wise, a great, and virtuous man.' Mrs. Washington requests me to present her compliments to Mr. Bache and yourself, with which you will both be pleased to accept of mine, and believe me to be, with great consideration and esteem, dear Madam, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
20 January, 1781.

SIR,

I should have done myself the honor of writing sooner to Your Excellency, on the late disturbance in the Pensylvania Line, had I not relied, that General Knox first, and afterwards Count des Deux Ponts,[2]

[1] Mrs. Bache was the daughter of Dr. Franklin, and she had said: "My father, in one of his last letters, says, 'If you see General Washington, assure him of my very great and sincere respect, and tell him that all the old generals here amuse themselves in studying the accounts of his operations, and approve highly of his conduct.'"

[2] Two colonels of this name were with the French army, Count Christian and Count Guillaume.

would give you the most accurate account of this affair —and had I not been waiting to hear the event of it and collect the particulars to enable me to give you a more perfect idea of it. The causes of complaint of this line, mostly composed of foreigners, and having even some British deserters, must in great part be known to your Excellency. The absolute want of pay and cloathing—the great scarcity of provisions were too severe a trial for men, a great proportion of whom could not be deeply impressed with the feelings of citizens. Some cause of complaint as to their inlistments and perhaps the instigations of internal enemies added to their discontents and contributed to bring them to so disagreeable an issue. The beginning of the disturbance you had from General Knox and the subsequent proceedings have no doubt been related to your Excellency by the Count des Deux Ponts, who being an eye witness had an opportunity of knowing all circumstances. I shall therefore content myself with adding that the civil authority having undertaken to settle the dispute there would have been an impropriety in my interfering in their conciliatory measures, which would not have suited the principles of military discipline ;—and that the matter is in a train of being terminated as well as the manner in which it was taken up gave us reason to expect.

It is somewhat extraordinary, that these men, however lost to a sense of duty had so far retained that of honor, as to reject the most advantageous propositions from the enemy. The rest of our Army (the Jersey troops excepted) being chiefly composed of

natives, I would flatter myself, will continue to struggle under the same difficulties, they have hitherto endured, which I cannot help remarking seem to reach the bounds of human patience.

I had last evening the pleasure of seeing at my quarters Count de Charlus—Count de Dillon[1] and Monsr. Du Mat.[2] The first of these Gentlemen acquainted me with the object of his journey to Philadelphia, which he is preparing to pursue agreeable to your desire.

I cannot forbear lamenting, Sir, that the absolute want of money, an evil too well known in our army, obliged me to interrupt the chain of communication.

But the conveyance by the post is so dilatory, and it is so important we should speedily hear from each other, that I am going to renew the chain from this place to Hartford and propose to you the expediency of having it continued to Rhode Island.

Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to have the honor of waiting on you at New Port and improving the opportunity to make a more extensive acquaintance with the troops under your orders. Besides the satisfaction, I should feel in seeing you again I think it very useful that we should have a further conversation on our affairs, in which I may avail myself of your opinion. But our circumstances have been such, that it has hitherto been out of my power to execute this favorite project of mine. The moment I do not think my presence at West Point essential, shall be devoted to a visit to your Excellency.

[1] Count Arthur Dillon, of Lauzun's legion.

[2] M. Dumas, one of Rochambeau's aids.

The reduction of my family by various contingencies, so that I had for some days but a single Aide—and the additional weight of business which of course devolved upon me, have prevented my writing to your Excellency lately as often as I wished.

By intelligence from New York, we hear the enemy have collected transports on the North River—It is probable that hearing of discontents among our troops, they mean to be in a situation to improve any opening that may offer.

Lt. Col. Laurens one of my Aide de Camps having been appointed by Congress to repair to the Court of France, to negotiate matters relative to our finances, as well as to other articles of great importance to our Army, they have directed him to confer before his departure with your Excellency and Monsieur Destouches.

In consequence of his instructions, I expect he will be shortly at New Port, where he will both receive your orders for France and avail himself of any advice your Excellency may be pleased to favour him with.

With sentiments of the most perfect regard and attachment, I have, &c.

TO THE EXECUTIVES OF THE STATES.[1]

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
22 January, 1781.

SIR:

I have received the disagreeable intelligence, that a part of the Jersey line had followed the example of that of the Pennsylvania;

[1] New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New York. The letters were different in unimportant details.

and when the advices came away, it was expected the revolt would be general. The precise intention of the mutineers was not known, but their complaints and demands were similar to those of the Pennsylvanians.

Persuaded that without some decisive effort, at all hazard's, to suppress this dangerous spirit, it would speedily infect the whole army, I have ordered as large a Detachment as we could spare from these posts, to march under Major General Howe, with orders to compel the mutineers to unconditional submission—to listen to no terms while they were in a state of resistance, and on their reduction, to execute instantly a few of the most active, and most incendiary leaders. I am not certain what part the troops detached for this purpose will act, but I flatter myself they will do their duty. I prefer any extremity to which the Jersey troops may be driven to a compromise.[1]

The weakness of the garrison, but still more its embarrassing distress for want of provisions, made it impossible to prosecute such measures with the Pennsylvanians, as the nature of the case demanded—and while we were making arrangements, as far as practicable to supply these defects, an accommodation took place

[1] Washington received from Col. Shreve intelligence of revolt of the Jersey line at 10 o'clock on the night of the 21st, and ordered Heath to make a detachment of five or six hundred men from the garrison of West Point, "of the most robust and best cloathed, properly officered and provided." He wrote that he would be at the Point in the morning. He wrote to Shreve, should he have sufficient force, to "compel the mutineers to unconditional submission. The more decisively you are able to act the better." To Col. Frelinghuysen: "I must entreat you to employ all your influence to inspire the militia with a disposition to coöperate with us, by representing the fatal consequences of the present temper of the soldiery not only to military subordination but to civil liberty. In reality both are fundamentally struck at by their undertaking in arms to dictate terms to their country."—21 January, 1781. And to Governor Livingston: "I doubt not we shall derive every aid from the good people of your state in suppressing this mutiny, not only from a conviction of the dangerous tendency of such proceedings to effect the entire dissolution of the army, but, as it may effect civil as well as military authority to have a redress of grievances demanded with arms, and also from a sense of the unreasonable conduct of the Jersey troops in revolting at a time when the State was exerting itself to redress all their real grievances."—23 January, 1781.

which will not only subvert the Pennsylvania line, but have a very pernicious influence on the whole army. I mean however by these remarks, only to give an idea of the miserable situation we are in, not to blame a measure which perhaps in our circumstances was the best that could have been adopted. The same embarrassments operate against coercion at this moment, but not in so great a degree; the Jersey troops not being, from their numbers, so formidable as were the Pennsylvanians.

I dare not detail the risks we run from the scantiness of supplies. We have received few or no cattle for some time past, nor do know of any shortly to be expected, The salted meat we ought to have reserved in the garrison, is now nearly exhausted. I cannot but renew my solicitations with your state to every expedience for contributing to our immediate relief.

With perfect respect, &c.

TO THE OFFICER COMMANDING THE BRITISH FLEET AT NEW YORK.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
25 January, 1781.

SIR,

Through a variety of channels, representations of too serious a nature to be disregarded have come to us, that the American naval prisoners in the harbor of New York are suffering all the extremities of distress, from a too crowded and in all respects disagreeable and unwholesome situation, on board the prison-ships, and from the want of food and other necessaries. The picture given us of their sufferings is truly calamitous and deplorable. If just, it is the obvious interest of both parties, (to omit the plea of humanity,) that the causes should be without delay inquired into and removed; if false, it is equally desirable, that effectual measures should be taken to obviate misappre-

hensions. This can only be done by permitting an officer, of confidence on both sides, to visit the prisoners in their respective confinements, and to examine into their true condition. This will either at once satisfy you, that, by some abuse of trust in the persons immediately charged with the care of the prisoners, their treatment is really such as has been described to us, and requires a change ; or it will convince us, that the clamors are ill grounded. A disposition to aggravate the miseries of captivity is too illiberal to be imputed to any but those subordinate characters, who, in every service, are too often remiss or unprincipled. This reflection assures me, that you will acquiesce in the mode proposed for ascertaining the truth, and detecting delinquency on one side, or falsehood on the other.

The discussions and asperities, which have had too much place on the subject of prisoners, are so irksome in themselves, and have had so many ill consequences, that it is infinitely to be wished, that there may be no room given to revive them. The mode I have suggested appears to me calculated to bring the present case to a fair, direct, and satisfactory issue. I am not sensible of any inconveniences it can be attended with, and I therefore hope for your concurrence. I shall be glad, as soon as possible, to hear from you on the subject. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] This letter was answered by Admiral Arbuthnot, three months after its date, as follows :

"ROYAL OAK, OFF NEW YORK, 21 April, 1781.

"SIR,

"If I had not been very busy, when I received your letter dated the 25th of January last, complaining of the treatment of the naval prisoners at this place,

TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR REDRESSING THE GRIEVANCES OF THE NEW JERSEY LINE.

GENTLEMEN, RINGWOOD, 27 Januury, 1781.

The fatal tendency of that spirit, which has shown itself in the Pennsylvania and Jersey lines, and which derived so much encouragement from impunity in the case of the former, determined me at all events to pursue a different conduct with respect to the latter. For this purpose I detached a body of troops under Major-General Howe, with orders to compel the mutineers to unconditional submission, and execute on the spot a few of the principal incendiaries. This has been effected this morning; and we have reason to believe the mutinous disposition of the troops is now completely subdued, and succeeded by a genuine penitence.[1]

I certainly should have answered it before this time; and, notwithstanding I then thought, as I now do, that my own testimony would have been sufficient to put the truth past a doubt, I ordered the strictest scrutiny to be made into the conduct of all parties concerned in the victualling and treatment of those unfortunate people. Their several testimonies you must have seen, and I give you my honor, that the transaction was conducted with such strict care and impartiality, that you may rely on its validity.

"Permit me now, Sir, to request, that you will take the proper steps to cause Mr. Bradford, your commissary, and the jailor at Philadelphia, to abate that inhumanity, which they exercise indiscriminately upon all people, who are so unfortunate as to be carried into that place. I will not trouble you, Sir, with a catalogue of grievances, further than to request, that the unfortunate may feel as little of the severities of war, as the circumstances of the time will permit, that in future they may not be fed in winter with salted clams, and that they may be afforded a sufficiency of fuel."

[1] "The mutineers were unexpectedly surrounded and awed into an unconditional surrender with little hesitation and no resistance. Two of the principal actors were executed on the spot, the rest pardoned. The spirit of mutiny seems now to have completely subsided, and to have given place to a genuine repentance. This was very far from being the case previous to this step, not-

But having punished guilt and supported authority, it now becomes proper to do justice. I therefore wish the commissioners, as soon as convenient, to enter upon the objects for which they have been appointed. But I think it my duty to observe to them the necessity of the greatest caution in discussing one article, the terms of the enlistments of the troops. In transacting this with the Pennsylvanians, for want of proper care, the greater part of the line has been dismissed, though only a small proportion was entitled to a dismission. Authentic and unequivocal proofs have been since found, that a majority of the discharged men were fairly and explicitly enlisted for the war. This evil arose from admitting the oaths of the individuals themselves, before the vouchers could be assembled. From the temper of the soldiery, who will avoid no means of getting rid of the service, it becomes necessary to admit none but the

withstanding the apparent submission which the assurances of redress had produced: they still continued insolent and refractory, and disobedient to the commands of their officers. A general pardon was promised by Colonel Dayton, on condition of an immediate and full return to duty. This condition was not performed on the part of the mutineers, and of course they were not entitled to the benefit of the promise, besides which the existence of the army called for an example."—*Washington to Governor Livingston*, 27 January, 1781. The two persons executed were David Gilmore of the Somerset County regiment, and Isaac Tuttle of the Morris County regiment. The mutineers were said to have been led by one George Grant, a sergeant-major of the 3d New Jersey regiment, and a deserter from the British.

The conduct of the detachment under General Howe drew out high praise from Washington. "I cannot omit doing justice to the detachment which was sent on this service. There was in its behavior every mark of fidelity, obedience, disapprobation of the conduct of the mutineers, and a conviction of the necessity of bringing them to submission and punishment. They made a long march over mountainous roads and through a deep snow with the greatest patience, and obeyed every order with alacrity."—*Washington to Meshech Weare*, January, 1781.

most unsuspicious evidence in their favor. Generally on investigation the complaints on this head have appeared ill founded; and as the presumption is strong against the soldier, the proofs of an unfair detention ought to be equally strong. Men are extremely wanted. It is at an infinite expense that they are procured, and they ought not lightly to be released from their engagements.[1]

Whenever a complaint has been made to me, I have invariably directed an inquiry; for I have ever considered it as not less impolitic than unjust in our service to use fraud in engaging or retaining men. But as I mentioned above, the complaint has much oftener been found to originate in the levity of the soldier than in truth. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOWE.

NEW WINDSOR, 29 January, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of this day with the papers accompanying it. For fear of a revival of the discontents in the Jersey line, I think it advisable

[1] "You will have heard of the defection of the Pennsylvania line, and the disagreeable compromise made with them. It has ended in a temporary dissolution of the line. One half has been absolutely discharged, and the remainder have been furloughed to reassemble in the beginning of April. The oaths of the men respecting the terms of their enlistments were precipitately admitted before the documents could be produced; by which it afterwards appeared, that the greater part had perjured themselves to get rid of the service. We had it not in our power to employ coercion in the first instance, owing to the distance they were from the main army, and a variety of other impediments, which you will easily conceive. I am told the line will soon be re-established on a better footing by new enlistments. Fortunately a part of the Jersey line since followed their example, and gave us an opportunity, after compelling all the mutineers to an unconditional surrender, to make examples of two of the

there should remain near them other troops on whose fidelity we can more perfectly rely. On this account I approve the detention of the New Hampshire detachment and the artillery, till we hear something more of the movements on Staten Island. Perhaps on receiving intelligence of what has happened in the Jersey line, General Robertson[1] may desist from his supposed intention.[2] To march the Jersey troops alone to Morristown might only be one temptation the more; and to harass other troops with that march in the present state of things would, in my opinion, be inexpedient on more accounts than one. If the Massachusetts detachment is pretty commodiously situated, it may remain where it is till we receive further intelligence; if not, let it return to West Point. In this case you will yourself also return. Signify, if you please, to Colonel Barber my approbation of his keeping the New Hampshire detachment and the artillery till further orders. I am, with great regard, Sir, &c.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

DEAR SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 31 January, 1781.

The disagreeable events wch. have taken place in the Pennsylvania and New Jersey lines, the general

most active leaders. The perfect submission and penitence, which appeared, made it unadvisable to extend the severity. I believe we shall have no more trouble at present from a spirit of this kind."—*Washington to Steuben*, 6 February, 1781.

[1] Washington wrote *Robinson*.

[2] General Robertson was on Staten Island with a large detachment of British troops, watching the movements in Jersey, and prepared, as it was supposed, to make an incursion for the purpose either of drawing over the malecontents, or of striking a blow in that quarter, as circumstances might seem to warrant.

discontent of the army for want of pay, cloathing, and Provisions, added to the usual course of business (which increases with our perplexities) will, I am persuaded, be admitted as a sufficient apology for my not acknowledging the receipt of your confidential and obliging letter of the 8th till now.

To learn from so good authority as your information, that the distresses of the citizens of this State are maturing into complaints, which are likely to produce serious consequences, is a circumstance as necessary to be known, as it is unpleasing to hear, and I thank you for the communication. The committees now forming are at this crisis disagreeable things; and if they cannot be counteracted, or diverted from their original purposes, may outgo the views of the well-meaning members of them, and plunge this Country into deeper distress and confusion, than it has hitherto experienced; though I have no doubt but that the same bountiful Providence, which has relieved us in a variety of difficulties heretofore, will enable us to emerge from them ultimately, and crown our struggles with success.

To trace these evils to their sources is by no means difficult; and errors once discovered are more than half corrected. This I hope is our case at present; but there can be no radical cure till Congress is vested, by the several States, with full and ample Powers to enact Laws for general purposes, and till the executive business is placed in the hands of able men and responsible characters. Requisitions then will be supported by Law. Jealousies, and those

ruinous delays and ill-timed compliances, arising from distrust and the fear of doing more than a Sister State, will cease. Business will be properly arranged; system and order will take place; and œconomy must follow; but not till we have corrected the fundamental errors enumerated above.

It would be no difficult matter to prove, that less than half the present expenditures, (including certificates,) is more than sufficient, if we had money, and these alterations in our political movements were adopted, to answer all our purposes. Taxes of course would be lessened, the burden would be equal and light, and men sharing a common lot would neither murmur nor despond.

The picture you have drawn of the distresses of the People of this State I am persuaded is true; and I have taken the liberty in a late letter, and in as delicate terms as I could express my sentiments, to hint to Congress the propriety of the policy of leaving the resources of this State and the Jersey as a kind of reserve. More than this might bring on me the charge of an intermeddler, till I could speak decisively from my own knowledge. * * *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
3 February, 1781.

SIR,

I have on different occasions done myself the honor to represent to Congress the inconveniences arising from the want of a proper gradation of punishments

in our military code; but, as no determination has been communicated to me, I conclude a multiplicity of business may have diverted their attention from the object. As I am convinced a great part of the vices of our discipline springs from this source, I take the liberty again to mention the subject. The highest corporal punishment we are allowed to give is a hundred lashes; between that and death there are no degrees. Instances dayly occurring of offences for which the former is entirely inadequate, Courts-Martial, in order to preserve some proportion between the crime and the punishment, are obliged to pronounce sentence of death. Capital sentences on this account become more frequent in our service, than in any other; so frequent as to render their execution in most cases inexpedient; and it happens from this, that the greater offences often escape punishment, while lesser are commonly punished; which cannot but operate as an encouragement to the commission of the former.

The inconveniences of this defect are obvious. Congress are sensible of the necessity of punishment in an army, of the justice and policy of a due proportion between the crime and the penalty, and, of course, of the necessity of proper degrees in the latter. I shall therefore content myself with observing, that it appears to me indispensable that there should be an extension of the present corporal punishment, and also that it would be useful to authorize Courts-Martial to sentence delinquents to labor at public works; perhaps even for some crimes,

particularly desertion, to transfer them from the land to the sea service, where they have less opportunity to indulge their inconstancy. A variety in punishment is of utility, as well as a proportion. The number of lashes may either be indefinite, left to the discretion of the Court to fix or limited to a larger number. In this case I would recommend five hundred.

There is one evil, however, which I shall particularize, resulting from the imperfection of our regulations in this respect. It is the increase of arbitrary punishments. Officers, finding discipline cannot be maintained by a regular course of proceeding, are tempted to use their own discretion, which sometimes occasions excesses ; to correct which, the interests of discipline will not permit much rigor. Prompt and therefore arbitrary punishments are not to be avoided in an army ; but the necessity for them will be more or less, in proportion as the military laws have more or less vigor.

There is another thing in our articles of war, which I beg leave to suggest to Congress the propriety of altering, it is the 2d article of the 4th section, allowing commanding officers of corps to furlough their soldiers. This privilege, if suffered to operate, would often deprive the army of more men than it could spare. It has been attended with abuses, it is disagreeable for a general order to restrain the exercise of a privilege granted by authority of Congress. To prevent uneasiness and discussion, it were to be wished Congress would think proper to repeal this article, and vest the power of designating the mode of granting furloughs in the Commander-in-chief, or

commanding officer of a separate army. It would perhaps be useful to prescribe a printed form, for which purpose I have taken the liberty to enclose one. This would hinder counterfeits and impositions. On the same principle I enclose the form of a discharge. It would in my opinion be a good regulation, that a soldier returning home, either on furlough or discharged, who did not in ten days after his return produce to the nearest Magistrate his printed certificate, should be apprehended by the magistrate as a deserter, and through the governor be reported to the general officer commanding in the State or department. This regulation, published in the army and in the several States, would have a tendency to discourage desertion. Something of this kind has been lately adopted in Virginia, and I doubt not will have a good effect. It were to be wished its utility may become general. If Congress approve I wish the Board of War may be directed to have a number of printed copies made of the furloughs and passes. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. I have just received the agreeable account contained in a letter from the Count de Rochambeau of which the enclosed is a copy.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

NEW WINDSOR, 3 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

The unexpected reduction of the Pennsylvania line, from the unfortunate affair, adds to the necessity of

[1] Read in Congress, February 9th. Referred to Jones, McDougall, and Sullivan.

the greatest attention to improve the measures adopted for recruiting it. I do not know precisely what these are; but I am informed in general that money is raising for the purpose, and that the recruiting service goes on with success. In order to have it conducted with regularity and activity, I am to request you will undertake to superintend it, and make your arrangements with the State accordingly. Enclosed you will find a copy of the instructions to the recruiting officers of the other parts of the army, which will also be proper for the government of those of your State. We have found from experience, that, by *some means or other*, numbers of men are lost between the place of enlistment and the place of rendezvous. To prevent this, as far as possible, will be worthy your particular attention. I have permitted General Wayne to retire for a while. General Irvine will immediately assist you in the execution of the business.

It seems a great part of the soldiers of your line have fraudulently procured a discharge, by the precipitate admission of their oaths before the papers relative to their enlistments could be produced. In right, this cannot exempt them from their engagements, and after what has happened, if it were thought expedient to compel the return of such, as being explicitly engaged for the war, have thus perjured themselves, I should have no doubt of its justice; and would take the most effectual and convenient measures to notify them, that if they did not immediately return to their duty, they should be considered

and treated as deserters. I perceive there are objections to the measure, and, unacquainted as I am with all the circumstances, I cannot competently judge of its propriety. I therefore shall be obliged to you for your opinion. Let me hear from time to time of your arrangements and progress. I am, with great esteem and regard, &c.

TO JOHN SULLIVAN, IN CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 4 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Colo. Armand delivered me your favor of the 29th ulto. last Evening, and I thank you for the sevl. communications contained in it. The measure adopted by Congress of appointing Ministers of War, Finance, and for Foreign Affairs, I think a very wise one. To give efficacy to it, proper characters will, no doubt, be chosen to conduct the business of these departments. How far Colo. Hamilton, of whom you ask my opinion as a financier, has turned his thoughts to that particular study, I am unable to ansr., because I never entered upon a discussion of this point with him. But this I can venture to advance, from a thorough knowledge of him, that there are few men to be found, of his age, who has a more general knowledge than he possesses; and none, whose soul is more firmly engaged in the cause, or who exceeds him in probity and sterling virtue.[1]

[1] In reply to this passage General Sullivan said: "I am glad to find, that you entertain the same sentiments of the virtues and abilities of Colonel Hamilton, as I have ever done myself. After I wrote, I found the eyes of Congress

I am clearly in sentiment with you, that our cause only became distressed, and apparently desperate, from an improper management of it; and that errors once discovered are more than half mended. I have no doubt of our abilities or resources, but we must not slumber nor Sleep; they never will be drawn forth if we do; nor will violent exertions, which subside with the occasion, answer our purposes. It is a provident foresight, a proper arrangement of business, system and order in the execution, that is to be productive of that œconomy, which is to defeat the efforts and hopes of Great Britain; and I am happy, thrice happy, on private as well as public accts., to find, that these are in train. For it will ease my shoulders of an immense burthen, which the deranged and perplexed situation of our affairs, and the distresses of every department of the army, which concentered in the Comr.-in-chief, had placed upon them.

I am not less pleased to hear that Maryland has acceded to the confederation, and that Virginia has relinquished its claim to the Land West of the Ohio, which, for fertility of Soil, pleasantness of clime, and

turned upon Robert Morris as financier. I did not therefore nominate Colonel Hamilton, as I foresaw it would be a vain attempt."—March 6th. A few days afterwards, Robert Morris was chosen, Samuel Adams and General Ward, of the Massachusetts delegation, declining to ballot.

General Sullivan added: "The choice of a minister of war is postponed to the 1st of October. This was a manœuvre of Samuel Adams and others from the north, fearing that, as I was in nomination, the choice would fall on me, who, having apostatized from the true New England faith by sometimes voting with the southern States, am not eligible. They were not, however, acquainted with all the circumstances. I was nominated against my will, and, if chosen, should not have accepted. General McDougall is appointed minister of marine."

other natural advantages, is equal to any known tract of Country in the Universe, of the same extent, taking the great Lakes for its northern boundary.[1]

I wish most devoutly a happy completion to your plan of finance, (which you say is near finished,) and much success to your scheme of borrowing coined specie and plate. But in what manner do you propose to apply the latter? As a fund to redeem its value in Paper to be emitted, or to coin it? If the latter, it will add one more to a thousand other reasons, wch. might be offered in proof of the necessity of vesting legislative or dictatorial powers in Congress, to make Laws of general utility for the

[1] "I am equally well pleased at the relinquishment of the claim of Virginia to the land west of Ohio. Individual, as well as general policy, in my opinion, required it of her; for I am sure she never could govern the settlers of that extensive country. I hope the reservations are not exceptionable ones."—*Washington to John Mathews*, 14 February, 1781.

"It is with peculiar pleasure I hear that Maryland has acceded to the Confederation, and that Virginia has yielded her claim to the country west of the Ohio. Great good, I hope, will result from these measures. The first will, undoubtedly enable Congress to speak with more decision in their requisitions of the respective States—without which it is physically impossible to prosecute the war with success, great as our expences are. The other will smooth the way & aid taxation by reconciling jarring interests, removing jealousies, and establishing a fund.

"There are other measures lately adopted in Congress with which I am highly pleased—the establishing of ministers (in place of Boards) for the departments of War, Finance, and foreign affairs—Proper Powers to and a judicious choice of men to fill these departments, will soon lead us to system, order, & œconomy—without which our affairs, already on the brink of ruin, would soon have been passed redemption. I enjoy by anticipation the benefit of these resolves—I hear with infinite pleasure (though no nomination has yet taken place) that you are generally spoken of for the department of War. At the same time I learn with pain from Colo. Hamilton that your acceptance of it is doubtful if the choice should fall on you.

"I am perfectly aware of all your objections. I feel their force, but they ought not to prevail. Our affairs are brought to an awful crisis. Nothing will recover them but the vigorous exertions of men of abilities, who know our

purposes of war, so that they might prohibit, under the pains and penalty of death, specie and provisions from going to the Enemy for Goods. The Traffic with New York is immense. Individual States will not make it felony, lest, (among other reasons,) it should not become genl.; and nothing short of it will ever check, much less stop a practice, which, at the same time that it serves to drain us of our Provision and Specie, removes the barrier between us and the enemy, corrupts the morals of our people by a lucrative traffic, by degrees weakens the opposition, affords a means for obtaining regular and perfect intelligence of every thing among us, while even in this respect

wants, & the best means of supplying them—these, sir, without a compliment, I think you possess. Why then, the department being necessary, should you shrink from the duties of it? The greater the chaos, the greater will be your merit in bringing forth order—and to expect to tread the different walks of public life without envy and its concomitants, is more than has yet fallen to the lot of human kind."—*Washington to Philip Schuyler*, 20 February, 1781.

"I cannot suppose, although some may mention me for the office, that Congress will be so imprudent with respect to themselves, or indelicate in regard to me, as to offer it, since I have explicitly on another occasion, and in writing, declared my intention never to hold any office under them, unless accompanied with a restoration of my military rank; and I candidly pointed at the inconveniences, which would result to themselves from such a restoration, as it must necessarily give umbrage to many officers."—*Schuyler to Washington*, 25 February, 1781.

In March Washington was informed that "by a manœuvre, too profound for my understanding, if it is intended for the public good, the choice of a minister of war is postponed till October. I have heard no reason assigned for it, and am uncharitable enough to believe, that no *good one* can be given."—*Washington to Schuyler*, 23 March, 1781.

"The motives, which led Congress to postpone filling the war department, have leaked out, and been communicated to me. General Gates was in nomination; but his friends reflecting, that the impropriety of appointing him, before he had exculpated himself from the imputation of misconduct in his command, would be too glaring an abuse of power, deferred it in hopes that by an acquittal the public confidence will be restored to him."—*Schuyler to Washington*, 3 April, 1781.

we benefit nothing from a fear of discovery. Men of all descriptions are now indiscriminately engaging in it, Whig, Tory, Speculator. By its being practised by those of the latter class, in a Manner with impunity, men, who two or three yrs. ago would have shuddered at the idea of such connexions, now pursue it with avidity, and reconcile it to themselves (in which their profits plead powerfully) upon a principle of equality with the Tory, who, being actuated by principle (favorable to us), and knowing that a forfeiture of the Goods to the Informer was all he had to dread, and that this was to be eluded by an agreemt. not to inform against each other, went into the measure without risk.

This is a digression; but the subject is of so serious a nature and so interesting to our wellbeing as a nation, that I never expect to see a happy termination of the war, nor great national concerns well conducted in Peace, till there is something more than a recommendatory power in Congress. It is not possible in time of war, that business can be conducted well without it. The last words therefore of my letter, and the first wish of my heart, concur in favor of it. I am with much esteem and respect, &c.

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

NEW WINDSOR, 6 February, 1781.

SIR,

I am much obliged to your Excellency for your letter of the 10th of January, giving me an account of the enemy's incursion into your State. Baron

Steuben has informed me of their successive operations to five miles below Hood's. It is mortifying to see so inconsiderable a party committing such extensive depredations with impunity; but, considering the situation of your State, it is to be wondered you have hitherto suffered so little molestation. I am apprehensive you will experience more in future; nor should I be surprised if the enemy were to establish a post in Virginia, till the season for opening the campaign here. But as the evils you have to apprehend from these predatory incursions are not to be compared with the injury to the common cause, and with the danger to your State in particular, from the conquest of the States to the southward of you, I am persuaded the attention to your immediate safety will not divert you from the measures intended to reinforce the southern army, and put it in a condition to stop the progress of the enemy in that quarter. The late accession of force makes them very formidable in Carolina, too powerful to be resisted without powerful succors from Virginia; and it is certainly her policy, as well as the interest of America, to keep the weight of the war at a distance from her. There is no doubt that the principal object of Arnold's operations is to make a diversion in favor of Cornwallis; and to remove this motive, by disappointing the intention, will be one of the surest ways for removing the enemy.

We have just received an account, that the enemy's fleet, employed in blockading that of our allies at Rhode Island, has lately suffered severely by a storm.

One seventy-four is said to have been stranded and entirely lost on the east end of Long Island, another (some accounts say two others) dismasted and towed into Gardiner's Bay, and a ninety-gun driven to sea in great distress. I expect every moment a confirmation of this agreeable intelligence, and the particulars. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] The British squadron, employed in blockading the French fleet at Newport, was stationed during the winter in Gardiner's Bay at the east end of Long Island. The vessels were anchored in a line between Gardiner's Island and Plum Island. The naval force kept on this station was of course superior to that of the French at Newport. It consisted of one ship of ninety guns, four of seventy-four, three of sixty-four, one of fifty, and two or three frigates.

On the 10th of January two French frigates and a transport, laden with various supplies for the fleet, set sail from Boston harbor. They arrived safely at Newport, after encountering three severe gales. The commander of the British squadron had gained intelligence of their departure from Boston, and sent out two line-of-battle ships and two frigates to intercept them. These vessels were driven back by the violence of the winds, and in the night of the 22d much damage was sustained by the British fleet in Gardiner's Bay. When the morning dawned, a sixty-four was discovered standing to the south of Montauk Point under jury-masts; the *Culloden*, seventy-four, was on a reef near Gardiner's Island; and the *Bedford*, seventy-four, was off New London, all her masts having been carried away and her upper tier of guns thrown overboard. The *Culloden* was finally lost, but her masts and guns were used to repair the two other ships. The *America*, a sixty-four, was driven out to sea, and was supposed at first to be lost; but she returned on the 8th of February without injury.

As soon as the news of this disaster reached M. Destouches, he despatched an officer to Plum Island, to observe the condition of the British fleet, intending to go out with all his force and attack it, should circumstances encourage the attempt. By the officer's report, however, the fleet appeared too strong, notwithstanding its recent injuries, and the anchorage too judiciously chosen between the islands, to render an attack advisable.

M. Destouches immediately resolved on another scheme, which the present state of affairs enabled him to execute. The Chevalier de la Luzerne, at the solicitation of the governor of Virginia and of Congress, had requested that if possible a ship of the line and some frigates might be sent into the Chesapeake Bay to oppose Arnold. The British force was so much weakened by the damage done to the three ships, that M. Destouches could now without hazard

TO MRS. FRANCIS, MRS. HILLEGAS, MRS. CLARKSON, MRS. BACHE, AND MRS. BLAIR.

NEW WINDSOR, 13 February, 1781.

LADIES,

The benevolent office, which added lustre to the qualities that ornamented your deceased friend,[1] could not have descended to more zealous or more deserving successors. The contributions of the association you represent have exceeded what could have been expected, and the spirit that animated the members of it entitles them to an equal place with any, who have preceded them in the walk of female patriotism. It embellishes the American character with a new trait, by proving that the love of country is blended with those softer domestic virtues, which have always been allowed to be more peculiarly *your own.*

You have not acquired admiration in your own country only; it is paid to you abroad, and, you will learn with pleasure, by a part of your own sex, where female accomplishments have attained their highest perfection, and who from the commencement have been the patronesses of American liberty.

The army ought not to regret its sacrifices or

spare a corresponding detachment from his own fleet. He determined, therefore, to send a sixty-four and two frigates to the Chesapeake for the purpose of blocking up Arnold's squadron, and of co-operating with the American troops on land. This detachment was commanded by M. de Tilly, and sailed from Newport on the 9th of February. Count de Rochambeau offered to furnish a division of land forces; but this was thought unnecessary and inexpedient, as the movement was intended to be rapid, and only to cut off Arnold's communication by water, it being presumed that the Continental troops and militia in Virginia were sufficient to operate against him by land.—*Rochambeau's MS. Letters*, January 29th, February 3d, 8th, 12th.—*Sparks.*

[1] Mrs. Reed of Philadelphia, who had been principally active in originating the association of ladies for collecting contributions in aid of the soldiers.

sufferings, when they meet with so flattering a reward, as in the sympathy of your sex; nor can it fear that its interests will be neglected, while espoused by advocates as powerful as they are amiable. I can only answer to the sentiments, which you do me the honor to express for me personally, that they would more than repay a life devoted to the service of the public and to testimonies of gratitude to yourselves. Accept the assurances of the perfect respect and esteem, with which I am, Ladies, your most obedient, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

NEW WINDSOR, 15 February, 1781.

SIR,

The Count de St. Maime[1] last evening did me the honor to deliver me your letter of the 3d instant.[2] It

[1] M. de Saint Mesme was colonel of the Soissonnais regiment.

[2] These advices were from Count de Rochambeau, dated February 3d, hinting at a plan proposed by M. Destouches for despatching three or four vessels of his squadron to the Chesapeake, as mentioned heretofore. The idea appeared in so favorable a light to Washington, that, although he was on the eve of a departure for Newport, he delayed his journey to prepare for sending a detachment of land forces to co-operate with such an expedition.

"Some advices, which I have received, will detain me here longer than I expected. I am to desire you will immediately have all the light companies of the troops under your command completed to fifty rank and file each, and will assemble the whole without delay at Peekskill. They must be completed with shoes, and as far as possible with all other necessaries for a march to Morristown. As it will be a pretty expeditious one, it is an additional reason for having the men robust, and in other respects well chosen. The adjutant-general must carefully inspect them when formed, and exchange all whom he does not approve. I wish the light troops to be ready to march from Peekskill by the 19th at farthest. I shall instruct the quartermaster-general to prepare wagons. The officers must take their light baggage, and there must be a sergeant added to each company."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 15 February, 1781.

appears by the report of the naval officer, that the enemy were inferior to the Chevalier Destouches, and, from the situation of the Bedford and the America, would probably remain so for some time. It appears also to have been your Excellency's expectation, that M. Destouches would either go with his whole fleet, or send a detachment to Chesapeake Bay in quest of Arnold.

There are a variety of positions where Arnold, by putting his vessels under protection of land batteries, may defy a naval attack, and, by collecting the provisions with which the country abounds and raising a few works, may remain in security till the enemy, by repairing their damaged ships, should regain their superiority at sea and come to his relief. Portsmouth, where he was by the last accounts, is particularly favorable to his security in this view. Unless therefore the ships, which M. Destouches may have sent, should by good fortune suddenly fall in with him, embarked and moving from one place to another, they will have little prospect of success.

From these considerations, if the object is judged of sufficient importance, it is in my opinion essential that there should be a coöperation of land and naval forces, and that M. Destouches should protect the expedition with his whole fleet. How far this will be safe or advisable, he can best judge; but it has appeared to me probable, that he would prefer going with his whole fleet, to a separation; as, by making a detachment he would lose his superiority and would give Mr. Arbuthnot an opportunity to escort his dis-

abled ships safe to New York, and follow his detachment with the remainder.

Imagining it to be not unlikely, that he may think it advisable to employ his whole fleet upon the occasion, and that your Excellency would approve a cooperation with a part of your army, the propriety of which, for want of a knowledge of your local situation, I cannot judge; to give the enterprise all possible chance of success, I have put under marching orders a detachment of twelve hundred men, which will proceed in a few days towards the Head of Elk River, there to embark and proceed to a coöperation. I did not delay the march of this detachment till I could hear from M. Destouches and you, as there is not a moment to be lost, if the expedition is to be undertaken; and the inconvenience of moving the troops to no purpose will be small, in comparison with the advantage of gaining time. I should have made it more considerable, could I have spared the troops. It may arrive at its destination of operation in about four weeks from this time.

If the Chevalier Destouches and your Excellency should approve the project of a coöperation, in which the whole fleet shall be employed, it will be desirable that you could embark about a thousand troops on board the ships, and as many pieces of siege artillery, with the necessary apparatus, as you will think proper. This will give a degree of certainty to the enterprise, which will be precarious without it.

Arnold's force consists of about fifteen hundred men. As these will be in intrenchments, (though

not formidable,) an inferior regular force with the militia will find it difficult to reduce them ; but, with the addition of the detachments I have proposed to you to send, the affair would soon be terminated. This addition is of importance ; but the sending of artillery is absolutely necessary, as it would be productive of too much delay and expense to send heavy pieces with their stores from hence by land at this season.

As by this movement the troops will be exposed to a disagreeable march, and some expense will be incurred, I shall be glad that both inconveniences may cease as soon as possible, if the project is not carried into execution ; and I therefore request your Excellency will favor me with an immediate answer. The capture of Arnold and his detachment will be an event particularly agreeable to this country, a great relief to the southern States, and of important utility in our future operations.[1]

I regret that the present prospect will compel me to postpone setting out for Rhode Island till I hear from you, and will deprive me still longer of the pleasure, for which I impatiently wish, of seeing your Excellency and the army. I am, &c.

[1] As Count de Rochambeau did not receive this letter till the 19th, which was ten days after the departure of M. de Tilly's detachment, it was not then practicable for him and M. Destouches to unite in carrying the plan here suggested into effect; more especially as the British blockading squadron had been strengthened by repairing the disabled vessels, and that of M. Destouches was weakened by the absence of three of his ships. In this state of things there would be too great a risk in going to sea with a force so much inferior. Count de Rochambeau wrote, that, if the above plan had come to his hands before the sailing of the detachment to Virginia, it was probable M. Destouches would have determined to go out with his whole fleet, and in that case he should have spared one thousand land troops for the enterprise.

February 19th.—The destruction of the corps under the command of Arnold is of such immense importance to the welfare of the southern States, that I have resolved to attempt it with the detachment I now send, in conjunction with the militia, even if it should not be convenient to your Excellency to detach a part of your force, provided M. Destouches is able to protect our operation by such a disposition of his fleet, as will give us the command of the Bay, and prevent succors being sent from New York. By a letter I have just received from Major General the Baron de Steuben, who commands in Virginia, it appears we may expect every thing from the temper of the militia, of which militia are capable; but an additional regular force to that I am sending would no doubt make the success much more prompt and certain. If M. Destouches should send any ships into the Bay, on the principle of a co-operation, it will be necessary that a light frigate should come up to the Head of Elk to protect the passage of the troops across the Bay. I impatiently wait to be favored with your Excellency's answer on these points. With the truest respect, &c.[1]

[1] When this letter was written, the departure of M. de Tilly's little squadron for the Chesapeake seems not to have been known, although it took place ten days before; but the intelligence must have come quickly after writing the letter, as it is mentioned in the instructions to Lafayette the next day. M. de Tilly returned to Newport on the 24th of February, having been absent only fifteen days. Near the entrance of the Chesapeake Bay he captured the *Romulus*, a British frigate of forty-four guns. He also took two privateers, one of eighteen and the other of fourteen guns, sent four prizes to Yorktown, and burnt four others. About five hundred prisoners were taken. Admiral Arbuthnot had sent a messenger to Arnold, giving intelligence of the approach of the French squadron, and had thus put him on his guard. He had with-

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL KNOX.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD QUARTERS, 16 February, 1781.

In the conference between the Count de Rochambeau and myself, it was agreed, that if by the aid of our Allies, we can have a Naval Superiority through the next Campaign, and an army of thirty thousand men (or double the force of the enemy & its dependencies) early enough in the season to operate in that quarter, we ought to prefer it to *evry* other object, as the most important and decisive, and applications have been made to the Court of France in this spirit which it is to be hoped will produce the desired effect.

It is therefore incumbent upon us to make evry necessary preparation on our part for the Siege of New York as far as our funds and means render practicable—Applications have been also made to the Court of France for a large supply of powder, arms, heavy cannon, and several other essential articles in your Department—But we cannot ascertain the extent of the success these applications will meet with, and as they only go to such articles as are less within the compass of our own internal means, we ought not to neglect any exertion in our power for procuring within ourselves those things of which we shall stand in need.

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drawn his frigates, one of forty-four and two others of thirty-two guns each, so high up the Elizabeth River, that they could not be approached by the *Eveillé*, the largest French vessel; and one of the French frigates, the *Surveillante*, ran aground in that river, and was got off only by taking out her guns and casks of water. An extract from M. de Tilly's letter to the Chevalier de la Luzerne will explain his situation and the motives for his return.

"Whatever desire I may have," said he, "to comply with the wishes of M. Destouches, and transport myself to all the parts of the Chesapeake Bay, into which the forces of Arnold could be withdrawn, it is not possible for me with my vessel to penetrate to the retreat in which he has taken shelter. The shallowness of the water does not allow me to ascend nearer to him than within about four leagues. I should run the hazard of being blockaded myself, if I were to remain long here; and, without a hope of doing harm to the enemy, I should enfeeble the force at Newport. These considerations, and the express orders of M. Destouches to employ no more time in the expedition than would be absolutely necessary, have determined me to put to sea."—*MS. Letter*, February 15th.—*Sparks.*

I give you this communication of what is in prospect that you may take your measures accordingly by making such estimates and demands, and other arrangments as may appear to you best calculated to produce what we want—And you may rely upon all the support it will be in my power to give—In your calculations, you will estimate the force on our side at about twenty thousand men; the remainder with a proper siege and field apparatus are to be supposed to be furnished by our allies—You are well acquainted with New York and its defences, and you can therefore judge of the means requisite for its reduction by a Siege.—The general idea of the plan of operations is this (if we are able to procure the force we count upon) to make two attacks, one against the works on York Island and the other against the works of Brooklyn on Long Island—the latter will probably be conducted by our Allies—ulterior operations must depend on circumstances—If we should find ourselves unable to undertake this most capital expedition, and if we have means equal to it we shall attempt a secondary object, the reduction of Charles Town—Savanah, Penobscot may successively come into contemplation—Your dispositions will have reference to these different objects though indeed a preparation for the principal one will substantially comprehend every lesser—These instructions would have been earlier given to you—but for the commotions in the army which suspended my attention.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 17 February, 1781.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favors of the 9th instant.

General Morgan's signal victory over Colo. Tarleton with the flower of the British army reflects the highest honor upon our Arms, and I hope will at least be attended with this advantage, that it will check the

offensive operations of the Enemy, untill General Greene shall have collected a much more respectable force than he had under his command by the last accounts from him. I am apprehensive, that the Southern States will look upon this victory as much more decisive in its consequences than it really is, and will relax in their exertions. It is to be wished, that the Gentlemen of Congress, who have interest in those States, would remove such ideas, if any such should be found to exist, and rather stimulate them to redouble their efforts to crush an enemy, pretty severely shaken by the two successful strokes upon Ferguson and Tarleton. * * *

I shall not fail to communicate to Major-General Parsons, and the Officers and Men who were under his command, the very flattering notice which Congress has been pleased to take of their expedition to Morrisania.[1]

Upon General Knox's return from the Eastward, I desired him to form an Estimate of the Artillery and Ordnance Stores necessary for an operation upon the largest scale, which would be that against New York. He has accordingly furnished one, Copy of which I do myself the honor to enclose for the information of Congress, and that application may be made in time to the States possessed of the heaviest Cannon for the loan of them and other Stores, should they be wanted, and that directions may be given to the

[1] A detachment under Brigadier-General Parsons and Colonel Hull had destroyed the barracks and some forage at Morrisania, belonging to Delancey's corps, taken fifty-two prisoners, brought off some horses and cattle, and destroyed a bridge across the Harlem. The enterprise was effected on the night of January 21st, and merited the "highest praise."

Board of War, and to those Boards whose Business it is to provide Ammunition, &c., to endeavor to procure the deficiency of the estimate. We ought without doubt to be prepared for an operation against New York. Should circumstances make it requisite to lessen the object, the overplus Stores would nevertheless form not only a valuable but such a Magazine as we ought ever to have in reserve. The impossibility of crossing the North River with Horses, and some unforeseen Business, have hitherto prevented my journey to Newport, and makes the time of my setting out precarious.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO ABRAHAM SKINNER.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
17 February, 1781.

SIR,

You are informed of a number of officers of the Convention troops, who have been ordered to Elizabeth Town for the purpose of going into New York to be exchanged. I am now to direct you will exchange them in the following manner: All those who have no similar ranks in possession of the enemy, you will place against such of our colonels as have been longest in captivity, the others, you will exchange against an equal number rank for rank.

But as two thirds of the officers of the Convention troops are now nearly exchanged, the enemy are bound on their own principles to let him[2] enter into imme-

[1] Read in Congress, February 26th. Referred to the Board of War.

[2] The letter is thus worded, but the sense is incomplete. Burgoyne is probably intended.

diate contemplation for exchange; and we ought in justice to ourselves to insist upon it.

Besides Lt. General Burgoyne the enemy owe us for three or four hundred private men who may now be applied in conjunction with General Burgoyne to the exchange of all our officers remaining on Long Island.

You will therefore immediately make the following proposition to the enemy—to place Lt.-General Burgoyne, the officers of Convention on their way to Elizabeth Town and the above mentioned privates, in opposition to our officers prisoners in this quarter; —the ballance which will be due us to be paid by the release of such officers of the Southern prisoners as we shall name to the amount of that ballance.

This proposition is so reasonable that I dare say it will be readily complied with by the enemy; especially as they must be sensible that the continuing to make any difficulties about Lt. General Burgoyne will necessarily operate to the prejudice of future exchanges.

It is not however to prevent the immediate exchange of the officers on their march as this is a point already agreed upon.

Governor Livingston has represented to me that some dissatisfactions have arisen about the manner of disposing of the prisoners made by the militia of the State. You are to observe the following rule:

To put all the persons taken in arms by the militia in a common stock to be exchanged indifferently for any prisoners of war in the hands of the enemy whether Continental troops or Militia according to priority of capture.

To exchange all mere citizens, persons not taken in arms for the citizens of the State whose militia has captured them.

The equity of the first rule must be obvious, as all the prisoners made by the Continental troops are applied indifferently to the exchange of themselves and the Militia taken in arms by the same rule of priority of capture; and without reciprocity there would be an evident disadvantage on the side of the Continental troops.

As the Governor also mentions some inconvenience for want of information on these points, I am to desire you will make him monthly reports of all exchanges of the Militia and citizens of the State made by you and of the prisoners made by the Militia who have come into your hands.

I wish you too immediately to give him an account of what has been done in these respects since you have been in the department that he may see the State is not injured by our arrangements.

I am frequently at a loss for want of your presence at Head Quarters.—I am therefore to desire you will reside constantly near it. When any particular business calls you else where you will represent it at Head Quarters. I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

I have ordered a detachment to be made at this post, to rendezvous at Peekskill the 19th instant, which, together with another to be formed at Morristown from the Jersey troops, will amount to about twelve hundred rank and file. The destination

of this detachment is to act against the corps of the enemy now in Virginia, in conjunction with the militia, and some ships from the fleet of the Chevalier Destouches, which he informs me sailed the 9th instant from Newport.

You will take the command of this detachment, which you will in the first instance march by battalions towards Pompton, there to rendezvous and afterwards proceed with all possible despatch to the Head of Elk. You will make your arrangements with the quartermaster-general concerning the route you are to take, concerning transportation, tents, intrenching tools and other articles in his department, of which you may stand in need; with the commissary-general concerning provisions; with the clothier concerning clothes, shoes &c.; and with General Knox concerning the artillery and stores you will want for the expedition. The result of these several arrangements you will report at headquarters.

When you arrive at Trenton, if the Delaware is open and boats are readily to be had, you will save time by going from thence by water to Christiana Bridge, Marcus Hook, or Chester; if you cannot avail yourself of this mode, you must proceed by land, by the route which the quartermaster and commissary may designate as most convenient for covering and supplies. You are not to suffer the detachment to be delayed for want of either provision, forage, or wagons on the route. Where the ordinary means will not suffice with certainty, you will have recourse to military impress. You will take your measures with the quartermaster-general in such a manner, that vessels may be ready by your arrival at the Head of Elk to convey you down the Bay to Hampton Roads, or to the point of operation; and you will open a previous communication with the officer commanding the ships of his Christian Majesty, to concert your coöperations, and to engage him to send, (if it can be spared,) a frigate up the Bay to cover your passage, without which, or some other armed vessels, might be otherwise insecure.

When you arrive at your destination, you must act as your own judgment and the circumstances shall direct. You will open a correspondence with the Baron de Steuben, who now commands in Virginia, informing him of your approach, and requesting him

to have a sufficient body of militia ready to act in conjunction with your detachment. It will be advisable for him to procure persons in whom he can confide, well acquainted with the country at Portsmouth and in the vicinity ; some, who are capable of giving you a military idea of it, and others to serve as guides.

You should give the earliest attention to acquiring a knowledge of the different rivers, but particularly James River, that you may know what harbors can best afford shelter and security to the cooperating squadron, in case of blockade by a superior force. You are to do no act whatever with Arnold, that directly or by implication may screen him from the punishment due to his treason and desertion, which, if he should fall into your hands, you will execute in the most summary way.

Having recommended it to Count de Rochambeau to detach a land force with the fleet, that it may be destined for the Chesapeake Bay (though, from the disposition which has already taken place, it is not probable that land force will be sent yet), if the recommendation should be complied with, you will govern yourself in coöperating with the officers commanding the French troops, agreeably to the intentions and instructions of his Most Christian Majesty, of which you were the bearer, and which, being still in your possession, it is unnecessary for me to recite.

You will keep me regularly advised of your movements and progress ; and, when the object of the detachment is fulfilled (or unfortunately disappointed), you will return with it by the same rout, if circumstances admit of it, and with as much expedition as possible to this post. I wish you a successful issue to the enterprise, and all the glory which I am persuaded you will deserve. Given at Head-Quarters, New Windsor, February 20th, 1781.[1]

[1] This letter was accompanied by the following note : " The enclosed are your instructions, in the prosecution of which, if you should receive authentic intelligence of the enemy's having left Virginia, or, by adverse fortune, the detachment from Monsieur Destouches has lost its superiority in that State, and is disabled thereby to coöperate, you will return with the detachment under your command, as the enemy cannot be affected by it while they have the command of the waters ; but the detachment may be capitally injured by committing itself on the water."

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY.

NEW WINDSOR, 20 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

The mail of last week brought me your letter of the 7th.

Never having entertained a doubt of your friendship, the trouble you have taken to remove a supposed suspicion of it would have given me concern were it not overbalanced by the pleasure I feel at receiving in the same instant fresh assurances of your esteem and regard for me. Declarations thereof on your part require candor & confidence on mine. I do not scruple therefore to confess, that I was not a little hurt by the implications, and the general complexion of Mr. Lovell's letter,—and was not a little embarrassed in determining upon a line of conduct proper for me to observe on the occasion.

Conscious that (neither directly nor indirectly) no act, word or thought of mine had given birth to the motion transmitted you, it was not a very pleasant thing to see a letter published, the natural interpretation of which, held out very different ideas.

The paragraph immediately following the motion is perfectly enigmatical to an uninformed mind ; but from the context and other circumstances, must be supposed to relate to the same person and subject. I have heard it did not, but the combination was remarkable, and its falling into the hands of the enemy, and being exposed to public view, unfortunate.[1]

[1] This matter is mentioned in Austin, *Life of Elbridge Gerry*, i., 337–344.

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
21 February, 1781.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to communicate to your Excellency a circumstance, which I hope will be followed by the most salutary consequences to the State of Virginia in particular, and which may ultimately have the happiest effect upon the interests of America in General. The Chevalier des Touche commanding his Most Christian Majesty's Squadron in the Harbour of New Port, finding himself enabled, since the late misfortune which happened to the British Fleet in Gardener's Bay, to make a detachment, has dispatched a ship of the Line of 64 Guns and three Frigates to Chesapeak in hopes of finding there and destroying the Fleet under the direction of Arnold. The French Ships sailed the 9th instant from Newport with a fair Wind—They have taken on board a quantity of Arms and Cloathing which had arrived there on account of the State of Virginia.

It is more than probable that these Ships will have arrived in the Chesapeak before my letter reaches you, but should they be retarded by adverse Winds or other accidents, your Excellency need not be told that the most profound secrecy will be necessary on such an occasion, for should the least hint escape, and Arnold come to the knowledge of it, he would not hesitate to take the opportunity of pushing out of the Bay. The Ships once arrived at their stations —the Matter becomes of public Notoriety without any disadvantage.

From an apprehension, that the Enemy may take such a position, as will enable them to defend themselves and their shipping without a land co-operation, and knowing that militia cannot be depended on for the vigorous measures that it may be necessary to pursue, I have put a respectable detachment from this Army in motion. It is commanded by Major General the Marquis de la Fayette. It will proceed by land to the Head of Elk, at which I calculate it will arrive by the 6th of March at farthest, and will fall down the Chesapeak in Transports.

I have written to the Baron de Steuben by this conveyance—given him the foregoing intelligence, and some directions relative to the position which he is to take with the Militia—collecting magazines, etc. It will be highly necessary that an immediate, safe and expeditious communication should be opened between the commanding officer of the French Squadron and the commanding officer on Shore—In this, and every other measure tending to promote the public good, I am confident of your Excellency's assistance, and I have desired the Baron to make application to you in every case where your countenance may be wanting. The Marquis de la Fayette, who is the Senior officer, will take the command upon his arrival—I recollect but one thing further which will require your Excellency's more immediate attention, and that is the Business of providing the most experienced and trusty Bay and River Pilots (should it not have been done before this reaches you) and sending them to the commanding officer

to be forwarded to the Fleet. This trouble must necessarily devolve upon your Excellency or some Gentlemen appointed by you, because our officers, being strangers, might be imposed upon in this most material point—I have, &c.

P. S. Should you have occasion to write to the Marquis de la Fayette let your first letter go by land under cover to the Quarter Master at the Head of Elk, and subsequent ones by Boats to the same place, because they will meet the transports in the Bay—

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

HEADQUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
21 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Having been obliged to make a very considerable temporary detachment from the army, I am under the necessity of immediately calling in what recruits may be raised in the neighboring States to replace it. I have directed the superintending officers at the different places of rendezvous to do this, but I must request your Excellency, if it possibly can be done, to furnish them in whole or in part with clothing, as I do not believe our whole stock on hand consists of more than waist coats and breeches for 2000 men. If the recruits could be made tolerably comfortable they might do garrison duty which is what they will be employed in until the Spring.

I cannot avoid mentioning a matter to your Excellency which is well worth your attention and that

of the Legislature. It is the shameful neglect, not to call it worse, of those persons appointed by law to muster and pass the recruits. General Parsons informs that the first which came from your State seven in number, were all totally unfit for service. He has sent them to Hartford, that the Legislature may themselves be witnesses of the imposition which has been put upon the public and which will be practised in numberless instances, while any but military men, interested in having healthy sound soldiers, are to be judges of the sufficiency of the recruit. To endeavor to remedy this evil, I have ordered a good field-officer to be stationed at each place of rendezvous, and if any man is brought in not qualified for the service, he is to refuse receiving him and to send him immediately back to the town which furnished him.

I had the honor of receiving your Excellency's favor of the 5th by the Duke de Lauzun. The Corps of Invalids are stationed, by order of Congress, at Philadelphia and Boston, and it is not therefore in my power to send the invalids of the army to any other places except by the authority of Congress.

I have honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

NEW WINDSOR, 22 February, 1781,

DEAR SIR,

You will, by the time this reaches you, be acquainted with the destination of the detachment under the command of the Marquis de Lafayette,

which, though as large as could be afforded from the troops in this quarter, is not so competent to the certain completion of the object in view as I could wish. By some accounts from Philadelphia, I am led to hope that further assistance may be derived from the Pennsylvania line. If you find it practicable to form a battalion of eight companies of fifty rank and file each, three officers to a company, and two field-officers to a battalion, in such time as the Marquis shall think will answer his purpose, you will be pleased to do it, and put it under his command. The detachment will be but temporary. The nomination of the field-officers I leave to you.

It is possible that the battalion may be formed, but not in time to embark at the Head of Elk with the other troops. This will not be so material, provided it can be done in a short time afterwards. That time you and the Marquis will determine. If the companies cannot be completed to fifty each, I would take them at forty rather than lose the reinforcement, or even half a battalion of two hundred under the command of one field-officer rather than none. Transports can be provided and held ready at the Head of Elk, should they not embark with the other troops. The places of rendezvous of the first, second, fifth, and sixth battalions are none of them very distant from Elk, and I should imagine the detachment would be most readily and conveniently formed from them. But this I leave to your judgment. I am, &c.[1]

[1] "Congress, as you will have been informed, have determined that the Pennsylvania line shall compose part of the southern army, and have ordered it to

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PARSONS.

NEW WINDSOR, 22 February, 1781.

SIR,

Captain Walker has communicated to me some discoveries made of a plot among the Tories of Stratford and Fairfield county, of which I have directed him to give you the particulars. It seems a clue has been found to it, which, if rightly improved, will enable us to detect the affair in all its extent, and punish the principals and their accomplices. I need not observe to you, of how dangerous a tendency combinations of this nature are, nor of how much importance it is to put an effectual stop to them. Your knowledge of the country and characters of the people will enable you best to conduct the investigation; and, as you live in one of the counties where it seems to originate, you may do it with the less risk of suspicion.

I am therefore to request, you will undertake the

proceed to Virginia in detachments, as they may be in readiness to march. I have given General St. Clair directions to carry the resolve into execution as expeditiously as possible. I think it essential, that one of the brigadiers should proceed with the first detachment, that he may be at hand to receive and form the remainder as they arrive. This may be the more necessary, as the presence of an officer of authority and rank may be requisite to restore that discipline, which the late convulsion will have in some degree destroyed. General Irvine being employed upon the recruiting business, this duty of course devolves upon you.

"I have advised General St. Clair, if circumstances will admit of the detachment under the command of the Marquis going down the Chesapeake by water, to endeavor to take the opportunity of sending as many men as possible by the same conveyance. You will, in that case, either make use of the water passage, or proceed by land and meet the troops at their place of debarkation, as you may think best. But I imagine you will prefer the former, when the Marquis informs you of the object of the detachment."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Wayne*, 26 February, 1781.

affair in the manner you think most likely to succeed, and will set about it immediately. You may want a party of men, when you have matured the discovery, to seize the persons concerned. These you may take from the Connecticut line, as a guard to the part of the country where they will be necessary. In the present state of our force they cannot exceed a subaltern's command. The two points most essential will be, to detect any characters of importance, who may be concerned in it, and if possible to get into our hands the register of the associators' names. The person, who will serve you as a spy, must be assured of some generous compensation, such as will be an object to his family, and secure his fidelity. This I leave to you to manage.

I am, with great regard, &c.

TO THE CHEVALIER DESTOUCHES.

Hd-Qrs., New Windsor, 22 February, 1781.

Sir,

I received two days since, the letter which you did me the honor to write me of the 17th instant.

The desire you express of being useful to these States, evinced by the measure you have taken to rid the coasts of Virginia of very troublesome and destructive neighbors, has a title to our acknowledgments. I hope the ships you have sent will meet with immediate success; but I am rather apprehensive the enemy will be able to secure their vessels under the protection of land batteries.

The Count de Rochambeau will have communicated to you my propositions. The detachment mentioned to him has marched, and may arrive at the Head of Elk by the 5th or 6th of March, to proceed thence by water to the point of operation. The information you were pleased to give me, that you held the remainder of your fleet ready to protect your expedition in the Bay, was a motive for accelerating its motions. If you have it in your power to block up Arnold in the Bay, and make such a general disposition with your fleet, as will at the same time prevent succors going from this quarter to him, I shall flatter myself that this coöperation will effect the reduction of the corps now in Virginia, and the ships will then of course fall into your hands. I am sensible the safe return of the America may make a material difference in your arrangements; but, however this may be, I wait your determination to regulate my ulterior measures.

If the late important and agreeable intelligence of the success of Count d'Estaing is confirmed,[1] we may flatter ourselves that it will at once lead to a decisive and glorious issue to the war. I am impatient to have it in my power to congratulate you on its certainty. With sentiments of perfect consideration and attachment, I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

[1] Report of a naval engagement between Count d'Estaing and Admiral Hood in the West Indies, which proved not to be well founded.

[2] Immediately after the return of the three vessels from the Chesapeake, M. Destouches resolved to set on foot another expedition with his whole naval force.

"The letters," said Count de Rochambeau, "found on board the vessels taken by M. de Tilly, have decided M. Destouches to follow in full the plan

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

NEW WINDSOR, 24 February, 1781.

SIR,

I am honored with Your Excellency's letters of the 8th, 12th and 18th since mine to you of the 19th.

The important intelligence you do me the favor to communicate comes so many ways, and with so many marks of authenticity, that we have the greatest reason to hope it is true. If so, without the interference of other powers, of which there seems to be no probability, I think we may regard it as an event decisive of a speedy and glorious termination of the war, and that his Britannic Majesty, in spite of his last speech, will be obliged to receive the law. In mine of the

given by your Excellency, and to risk every thing to hinder Arnold from establishing himself at Portsmouth in Virginia. M. Destouches is arming with the greatest diligence the forty-four-gun ship that was taken, and he hopes that this, with the frigates, will be able to go up Elizabeth River. He will protect this expedition with his whole fleet. Your Excellency has given me orders to join thereto one thousand men. I will send eleven hundred and twenty. All my grenadiers and chasseurs will be there. The corps will be commanded by the Baron de Vioménil. I will add four four-pounders, four twelve-pounders, and four *obusiers*. The navy will furnish twenty-four-pounders if necessary, but it is presumed that against earthen intrenchments the twelve-pounders will be sufficient.

"As to leaving our road and harbor without defence, though I shall have a great many transports to protect, and very little artillery of a long reach, with about twenty-five hundred men under arms, I will do my best to prevent our transports or magazines from receiving any damage. I propose asking the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island to send me for that purpose two thousand militia, to stay here while this expedition may last. I hope your Excellency will approve of my making use of your name, in my demand to the governors of both of these States. The great consequence, that your Excellency seemed to attach to the establishment of Arnold at Portsmouth, has determined M. Destouches to sacrifice every other object to this one. I expect all this armament to be ready eight days hence."—*MS. Letter of Count de Rochambeau*, February 25th.

19th I informed you of my ultimate determination, respecting the detachment from this army. The enclosed for the Chevalier Destouches, (which, after perusal, I beg you to seal and transmit,) communicates its march, the time of its expected arrival at its destination, and my present views.

There are rumors from New York, that Sir Henry Clinton had received orders to concentre his force at one point, but, as they come through a suspected channel, I give them no credit; yet, if the enemy have received the blow of which our West India accounts speak, this would be a natural consequence.

The flattering distinction paid to the anniversary of my birth-day is an honor for which I dare not attempt to express my gratitude. I confide in your Excellency's sensibility to interpret my feelings for this, and for the obliging manner in which you are pleased to announce it. The measures we have been taking for the expedition to Virginia will delay some time my visit to Rhode Island. I wait to see whether Sir Henry Clinton may form any new project in consequence. When this is ascertained, and the additional precautions we are taking for security here are completed, I shall yield to my impatience for testifying personally my attachment to your Excellency and your army. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] *From Count de Rochambeau's reply*: "I have received your Excellency's favor of the 24th instant. All that regards the land forces will be ready in twenty-four hours, but the navy may yet be eight days before every thing will be ready on her part. Be assured, that, on my part, nothing shall be wanting to make the greatest diligence."—February 27th.

Three o'clock, P. M.—"I have this moment received an express from Boston, with the good news, that the frigate Astrée, commanded by M. de la

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

NEW WINDSOR, 24 February, 1781.

SIR,

In answer to your Excellency's letter of the 14th I wrote fully on the 19th, since which I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 20th. The reiterated request of both Houses of Assembly, to leave the two regiments of the State in the quarter where they now are, places me in a delicate and painful situation. I have already assured your Excellency, and through you the legislature, of my perfect disposition to comply with the wishes of the State, as far as I have the means, to which indeed its exertions entitle it; but, as an officer intrusted with the general interest of the confederacy, in expectation of an offensive campaign, under engagements which I shall at any rate find it difficult to fulfil, I cannot, in policy, in justice to the United States, in good faith to our allies, consent to divest myself of so considerable a part of my efficient force, as the two regiments in question. The good of the service, joined to my regard for the State, will always prompt me, as it has heretofore done, to every effort in my power to prevent or repel attacks upon it; but to give an assur-

Pérouse, has just arrived, and that she brings money and despatches from Court, and that the captain was to land them the next day."

March 1st.—"I send an extract from the ministerial letters, which I have received by the frigate commanded by M. de la Pérouse. You will see that my son has stayed, by order of his Majesty, to wait for the result of a definitive project. By private letters from Versailles we learn, that the Prince de Montbarrey has given in his resignation, and is succeeded by the Marquis de Ségur one of our most distinguished lieutenant-generals, an intimate of the Marquis de Castries, and that there are great movements in the ministry."

ance, that its troops shall remain as a cover to the western and northern frontier from an apprehended invasion, is more than I could answer, while our views extend beyond a mere defensive.

Other applications similar to that from this State have been made to me, a compliance with which would leave us without a competent garrison for the defence of West Point. A heavy detachment from this part of the army, for an important service, has obliged me to draw in all my outposts, and to call six companies of the York line from Albany, as the smallest possible number necessary for the security of West Point.

While I am compelled to deliver these sentiments, I entreat your Excellency to assure the Assembly, that it is impossible to feel more than I do for the distresses of the State, and that, as far as it can be made consistent with my general duty, no person will do more to serve it. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 25 February, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have received your favors of the 23d from Pompton by Captn. Castaign. You may make yourself perfectly easy as to ships of the line being at New York. The Iris and the others mentioned by Hagerty are frigates. This man relates a circumstance to me, that he does not seem to have informed you of. It is, that a reinforcement of six hundred men is

preparing for Arnold, and that the convoy is to be the Farges Indiaman, which is fitting up, but that she will not be ready till the end of this week. I do not give much credit to any thing he says; but, if it is so, Colonel Dayton will probably be able to gain some knowledge of it.

The return of clothing wanting for the detachment was so long coming to hand, that I had directed the clothier to despatch a parcel, which he did some days ago, and I am glad to find that the essential articles all exceed your demand. It will be too late to send a further supply of shoes from hence. You must endeavor to get them in Philadelphia. * * *

The America of sixty-four guns had got into Gardiner's Bay, after being long out. The Bedford was remasted. This again gives Admiral Arbuthnot the superiority, and puts it out of M. Destouches's power to give us any further assistance. * * *

I have already hinted to you the necessity of having a number of Boats for debarking the Troops at the point of destination.—This is a matter, to which the Qr. Mr. Genl. must pay particular attention to.—I therefore repeat it.—It is also of essential importance to keep fast Sailing Vessels (Pilot-Boats would be best) plying from the Hd. of Elk to Hampton Road for the purpose of corresponding with the French Commodore, or to apprize you of any danger, which may arise from a change of circumstances; as I am not without apprehensions, that the detachment from Monsr. Destouches's squadron will be followed by a superior one from Gardiner's bay, as soon as

the destination of the former is known.—This evinces strongly the necessity of despatch, which depends upon great exertion in providing the Transports.

With the Comy.-Genl. of Issues, as I mentioned in a former letter, or his Deputy at Phila., and Colo. Pickering, you will make the necessary arrangemt. for Provisions for your Corps. If it could be done solely with the latter, the business would be in fewer hands.—As your march will be rapid to the head of Elk, leave good officers to bring up the tired, lazy, and drunken soldiers.

February 26th.[1]—I do not think it very probable, that three hundred dragoons will trust themselves in the heart of Connecticut, with a superior regular corps and the force of the country to oppose them, but I have nevertheless given the intelligence to the Duke de Lauzun.[2]

Upon your arrival in Philadelphia, if not before, you will hear that a body of men, supposed to be a reinforcement under General Provost from Europe, had landed at Cape fear, in consequence of which the whole Pennsylvania line are ordered to the southward.[3] I have therefore directed General St. Clair,

[1] A separate letter, according to the draft.

[2] Intelligence had come from New York that three hundred horsemen had crossed over to Long Island and proceeded eastward, and that boats had at the same time been sent up the Sound. It was inferred that this party would pass from Long Island to Connecticut, and attempt to intercept General Washington on his way to Newport, as it was supposed his intended journey was known to the enemy. Lafayette suggested, that the Duke de Lauzun should be informed of this movement as soon as possible, that he might be prepared with his cavalry, then stationed at Lebanon, to repel the invaders.

[3] The party which landed at Cape Fear consisted of three hundred men detached from Charleston under Major Craig.

instead of confining himself to a single battalion, to send as many as he can down the Chesapeake with your detachment, if circumstances should admit of your embarkation.

If the troops landed at Cape May are from Europe, I do not imagine their convoy is more than a frigate or two. Will it not be well, when matters are ripe for discovering your object, to endeavor to get the Ariel, the Trumbull, and any other public vessels of war, which may be in the Delaware, to go round to the Chesapeake? A combination of vessels, though of unequal rate, might perplex and distress the small squadron of our ally. This you can urge to the gentlemen of the marine department. If nothing unforeseen occurs, I shall set out for Rhode Island when General Duportail arrives here. I think I may expect him about the 1st of next month. I am, &c.

TO JOHN MATHEWS, IN CONGRESS.

HEADQUARTERS NEW WINDSOR,
26 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 15th was not received until this morning. I am so totally unacquainted with the state of the southern prisoners, that I did not choose to enter into a negotiation with Sir Henry Clinton, on the idea of a general exchange, although liberty was given me by Congress. Nothing particular has therefore been done respecting the gentlemen, who are confined at St. Augustine; as it could not be

supposed, that the enemy would consent to a partial exchange of persons of the most considerable influence in the southern States, and who, besides, are pretended to have rendered themselves obnoxious. Indeed, whenever a negotiation is entered upon, I foresee difficulties in procuring the liberation of those gentlemen, who are most of them of eminence in the civil line, as we have none of similar rank in our possession to exchange for them. However, whenever the matter is gone into, you may be assured that all possible attention shall be paid to them, not only from my own inclination to serve them, but in obedience to an act of Congress, which directs that particular regard shall be had to them in the negotiation of the exchanges of southern prisoners. The interest you take in them will be an additional consideration. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
26 February, 1781.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving last night your Excellency's two letters of the 20th instant one of them in Congress, with their Inclosures.

The situation of the southern States is alarming; the more so, as the measure of providing a regular and permanent force was by my last advices still unattempted, where the danger was most pressing and immediate. Unless all the states enter in good earnest upon this plan, we have little to expect but their successive subjugation. Particular successes,

obtained against all the chances of war, have had too much influence, to the prejudice of general and substantial principles.

In obedience to the orders of Congress, I have imparted their wish to His Excellency the Count de Rochambeau, informing him that the proposal was made on the presumption of a naval superiority. But, as this superiority has ceased by the safe return of the America, a sixty-four, which was missing and supposed to be dismasted, and by a detachment of one vessel of the line and two or three frigates into the Chesapeake Bay, it will of course be out of the power of our allies to transport the whole or any part of their troops to the succor of the southern States. Besides this obstacle, the present instructions and expectations of the French General and naval commander are opposed to an immediate change of position.

The order for the Pensylvania line to march to the Southward interferes with the conditional arrangements of the next campaign ; but in the present exigency of accumulating danger in that quarter, I am entirely of opinion that these troops ought to be detached.

On the first notice of the storm and its ill effects, I intimated to the French general the possibility and importance of improving the opportunity in an attempt upon Arnold. When I received a more distinct account of the damage sustained by the British fleet, (which was a long time coming to me,) I immediately put in motion as large a part of my small force here, as I could with any prudence spare to

proceed under the command of the Marquis de Lafayette to the Head of Elk, and made without delay a proposal for a coöperation in the Chesapeake Bay with the whole of the fleet of our allies and a part of their land force. Before my proposition arrived, in consequence of an application to him through the Chevalier de la Luzerne, Mr. Destouches had sent the force I have already mentioned to Chesapeake Bay. This separation, and the return of the America, prevented the execution of my plan ; but the Marquis de Lafayette still continues his march to attempt whatever circumstances will permit.

It is probable Congress, before this reaches them, will have heard of the arrival of the ships in the Bay ; but, if they should have met with any delay, I need not observe how necessary it will be to conceal our expectations ; as the only chance of success to a merely maritime operation depends on surprise. I take the liberty to suggest, that the American frigates in the Delaware may perhaps at this juncture be usefully employed in Chesapeake or Cape Fear. The latter may be preferable, but secrecy and despatch will be essential. * * *

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

NEW WINDSOR, 27 February, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 15th ; I am glad to hear of Colonel Laurens's departure. He wrote to me a few days before he sailed, and mentioned in

[1] Read in Congress, March 2d.

the warmest manner your exertions to get the ship manned. The few Continental soldiers you spared on the occasion were well bestowed, considering the importance of Colonel Laurens's mission.[1]

By a resolve of Congress of the 4th of January the Board of War seemed to have the payment of the invalids; the resolve is as follows: "That the Board of War draw no more warrants on the Paymaster except for the invalid Regiments and the regiment of artificers in the Department of the Commissary General military stores until the further order of Congress." From this I should imagine the commanding officer at Boston should regularly transmit his muster rolls and abstract to the Board and obtain a warrant.

The late Lt. Colo. Loring's case is referred to me by Congress and I shall take it into consideration.

Our last advices from General Greene are of the 31st of January. Lord Cornwallis, with twenty-five hundred men entirely divested of baggage, had made

[1] On the arrival of Colonel Laurens in Boston, January 25th, he found that the Alliance had not completed her crew, and that the prospect of soon doing it was extremely unfavorable. The Massachusetts Navy Board encouraged him to believe that the power of impressing seamen for this special service might be obtained from the legislature; and, while the Board was pursuing the application, he made a short visit to Count de Rochambeau at Newport, whom it was important for him to consult on the subject of his mission. The legislature declined granting the power to impress, and the rumor that such a thing was in agitation had so alarmed the sailors, that some concealed themselves, and others fled from the town. When Colonel Laurens returned, therefore, very little progress had been made in obtaining men. The legislature offered an increased bounty out of their own chest, with permission to enlist State troops then on duty at the Castle. Several recruits were thus procured; but still there was a deficiency, which General Lincoln made up by taking men from the Continental troops, who were qualified for the marine service. Colonel Laurens went to sea on the 13th of February, after having been wind-bound for several days in Nantasket Road.—*MS. Letters of Lincoln and Laurens*, February 4th and 15th.—*Sparks*.

a push against General Morgan, and was near recovering the prisoners taken upon the 17th of January; but General Morgan got them off, and they had crossed the Yadkin on their way to Virginia. Lord Cornwallis was still advancing, and General Greene studiously avoiding an engagement, except he could draw together a greater force of militia than he had much prospect of. I am very anxious for the issue of this manœuvre, which may be productive of the most important consequences. Lieutenant-Colonel Lee with his legion had surprised Georgetown. I have not many particulars. He took Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and several other officers prisoners, and killed a Major Irvine. A good many privates were killed; few taken. Our loss one killed, two wounded.

I have tried the efficacy of proclamations of pardon to deserters so often, and have found so little good resulting from them, that I am inclined to think desertion is rather encouraged than remedied by a frequent repetition of them. The soldier goes off, remains at home after a furlough, and looks for a proclamation as a thing of course. I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 8 o'clock, P.M.,
27 February, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have this moment received a letter from the Count de Rochambeau with intelligence, of which the enclosed is a copy. By this it appears, that the first squadron had returned to Newport; but that M. Destouches was fitting up the Romulus with an intent to

despatch her, and I suppose the frigates, for Chesapeake, as being of better construction for the navigation of that Bay, than the ships which were before there. I have written to Count de Rochambeau and to M. Destouches, and have informed them, that you are prosecuting your march to the Head of Elk, that you will embark there and wait only for a certain knowledge that the French squadron is again in the Bay of Chesapeake, to determine you to proceed to a coöperation. I hope the squadron will have again sailed before my letter reaches Newport.

Upon your arrival at the Head of Elk, you will immediately embark the troops if the transports are ready, that not a moment's time be lost, after you receive certain advices that our friends are below. But until that matter is ascertained beyond a doubt, you will on no account leave Elk River. You will write immediately to the Baron Steuben, and inform him that he may expect the return of the squadron, and that he is to continue every preparation and make every arrangement before directed for the prosecution of the coöperation.

With the warmest attachment, I am, &c.

P.S. You will readily perceive the propriety of keeping parts of this letter and intelligence secret.

TO JOHN PARK CUSTIS.

DEAR CUSTIS, NEW WINDSOR, 28 February, 1781.

If you will accept a hasty letter in return for yours of last month, I will devote a few moments to this purpose, and confine myself to an interesting point

or two. I do not suppose, that so young a senator as you are, little versed in political disquisitions, can yet have much influence in a populous assembly, composed of Gentln. of various talents and of different views. But it is in your power to be punctual in your attendance (and duty to the trust reposed in you exacts it of you), to hear dispassionately and determine coolly all great questions. To be disgusted at the decision of questions, because they are not consonant to our own ideas, and to withdraw ourselves ffom public assemblies, or to neglect our attendance at them, upon suspicion that there is a party formed, who are inimical to our cause and to the true interest of our country, is wrong, because these things may originate in a difference of opinion ; but, supposing the fact is otherwise, and that our suspicions are well founded, it is the indispensable duty of every patriot to counteract them by the most steady and uniform opposition. This advice is the result of information, that, you and others being dissatisfied at the proceedings of the Virginia Assembly, and thinking your attendance of little avail (as there is always a majority for measures, which you and a minority conceive to be repugnant to the interest of your Country), are indifferent about the Assembly.

The next and I believe the last thing I shall have time to touch upon, is our military establishment ; and here, if I thought the conviction of having a permanent force had not ere this flashed upon every man's mind, I could write a volume in support of the utility of it ; for no day or hour arrives unaccompd.

with proof of some loss, some expense, or some misfortune consequent of the want of it. No operation of war, offensive or defensive, can be carried on for any length of time without it. No funds are adequate to the supplies of a fluctuating army, tho' it may go under the denomination of a regular one; much less are they competent to the support of militia. In a word, for it is unnecessary to go into all the reasons the subject will admit of, we have brought a cause, which might have been happily terminated years ago by the adoption of proper measures, to the verge of ruin by temporary enlistments and a reliance on militia. The sums expended in bounties, waste of arms, consumption of military stores, Provisions, and Camp utensils, to say nothing of cloathing, which temporary soldiers are always receiving and always in want of, are too great for the resources of any nation, and prove the fallacy and danger of temporary expedients, which are no more than mushrooms, and of as short duration, but leave a sting, that is, a debt (which is continually revolving upon us) behind them.

It must be a settled plan, founded in system, order, and œconomy, that is to carry us triumphantly through the war. Supineness and indifference to the distresses and cries of a sister State, when danger is far off, and a general but momentary resort to arms when it comes to our doors, are equally impolitic and dangerous, and prove the necessity of a controlling power in Congress to regulate and direct all matters of *general* concern—without it the great business of

war never can be well conducted, if it can be conducted at all, while the powers of Congress are only recommendatory. While one State yields obedience, and another refuses it, while a third mutilates and adopts the measure in part only, and all vary in time and manner, it is scarcely possible our affairs should prosper, or that any thing but disappointmt. can follow the best concerted plans. The willing States are almost ruined by their exertions; distrust and jealousy succeeds to it. Hence proceed neglect and ill timed compliances, one State waiting to see what another will do. This thwarts all our measures, after a heavy tho' ineffectual expense is incurred.

Does not these things show, that in ye most striking point of view, the indispensable necessity, the great and good policy, of each State sending its ablest and best men to Congress; men, who have a perfect understanding of the constitution of their Country, of its policy and interests; and of vesting that body with competent powers? Our Independence depends upon it, our respectability and consequence in Europe depends upon it, our greatness as a nation hereafter depends upon it. The fear of giving sufficient powers to Congress, for the purposes I have mentioned, is futile, without it our Independence fails and each Assembly, under its present constitution, will be annihilated, and we must once more return to the Government of G. Britain, and be made to kiss the rod preparing for our correction. A nominal head, which at present is but another name for Congress, will no longer do. That honor-

able body, after hearing the interests and views of the several States fairly discussed and explained by their respective representatives, must dictate, and not merely recommend and leave it to the States afterwards to do as they please, which, as I have observed before, is in many cases to do nothing at all.

When I began this letter, I did not expect to have filled more than one side of the sheet, but I have run on insensibly. If you are at home, give my love to Nelly and the children; if at Richmond, present my complimts. to any inquiring friends. I am sincerely and affectionately, &c.

P. S. The Public Gazette will give you all the news of this quarter—our eyes are anxiously towards the South for events.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 1 March, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have just received letters from the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevalier Destouches, informing me of their intention to operate in the Chesapeake Bay with their whole fleet, and a detachment of eleven hundred French troops, grenadiers and chasseurs included. The Chevalier expected to sail the 5th of this month, so that you will arrive at the Head of Elk, before he appears in the Bay. He seems to make a difficulty, which I do not comprehend, about protecting the passage of your detachment down the Bay;

but, as it is entirely without foundation, I take for granted it will cease on his arrival. It is of the greatest importance to the expedition, as well as for the honor of our arms, that you should be on the spot to coöperate.

The Count de Rochambeau requests me to send an aid-de-camp to the commanding officer in Virginia, to assemble the militia and have every thing else ready against the arrival of the fleet. You know all the necessary directions have been given; but, to gratify the Count, I am to desire you will send Colonel Gouvion without delay to the Baron De Steuben to communicate this latter intelligence, and press the preparations, directing the Baron on the arrival of the French troops to enter immediately into their views. You know the infinite value of secrecy in an expedition circumstanced like this. The Baron de Viomênil will command the French detachment. I set out in the morning for Rhode Island, where I hope to arrive before the fleet sails, to level all difficulties and be in the way to improve circumstances.

Since writing the above, I have received a letter from General Greene, by which it appears, Cornwallis, with twenty-five hundred men, was penetrating the country with great rapidity, and Greene, with a much inferior force, retiring before him, having determined to pass the Roanoke. This intelligence, and an apprehension that Arnold may make his escape before the fleet can arrive in the Bay, induce me to give you greater latitude than you had in your original instructions. You are at liberty to concert a plan

with the French general and naval commander for a descent into North Carolina, to cut off the detachment of the enemy, which had ascended Cape Fear River, intercept if possible Cornwallis, and relieve General Greene and the southern States. This, however, I think ought to be a secondary object, and only attempted in case of Arnold's retreat to New York, or in case you should think his reduction would be attended with too much delay, and that the other enterprise would be more easy, and, was from circumstances, more necessary. There should be strong reasons to induce a change of our first plan against Arnold, if he is still in Virginia. With a view to the second enterprise, you must be making your arrangements for transportation and supplies, and must endeavor to gain all the information you can about the country, which may be the scene of your operations.

Your continuing your march, after the fleet had withdrawn itself from the Bay, may excite suspicions of their intended return. You can cover your design by saying you are going to the assistance of General Greene. You will remember, that your corps is a part of this army, and will let this idea have proper weight in your determinations. I am, &c.[1]

[1] General Washington left head-quarters on the 2d. "This day [6th] General Washington, who was expected, arrived [at Newport] about two o'clock. He first went to the *Duc de Burgogne*, where all our generals were. He then landed; all the troops were under arms; I was presented to him. His face is handsome, noble and mild. He is tall (at the least, five feet, eight inches). In the evening, I was at supper with him. I mark as a fortunate day, that in which I have been able to behold a man so truly great."—*Journal of Claude Blanchard*, 93. The land forces were embarked, and the fleet sailed on the evening of the 8th, and on the 10th the British fleet sailed from

TO GOVERNOR HANCOCK.

HARTFORD, 17 March, 1781.

SIR,

It would have afforded me the greatest pleasure, had I been able to have extended my late visit to Newport as far as Boston; but the important operations, which may be expected at the southward, made it necessary for me to return as soon as possible to the North River, that I might be more immediately in the way of receiving intelligence, and communicating any which might be essential to the common interest to Count de Rochambeau. The present is a most important moment. The success of the expedition now in agitation seems to depend

Gardiner's Bay, for the Chesapeake. He remained several days at Newport, and made such arrangements with Count de Rochambeau for the operations of the campaign, as the present state of affairs would warrant. He was absent nineteen days from New Windsor, during which time General Heath commanded.

The day after the fleet went to sea from Gardiner's Bay, Admiral Arbuthnot wrote as follows to Sir Henry Clinton: "Before this time you will have received the intelligence of the French having quitted Rhode Island with their ships and troops, supposed for the Chesapeake, and that they have dismantled their forts. I detached the Pearl and Isis two days ago, to reconnoitre Newport harbour. They rejoined me yesterday morning, and acquainted me, that none of the enemy's ships remain there. In consequence of which I proceed in quest of them directly for the Chesapeake with the utmost expedition; Captain Hudson's vessels being sufficient to escort any troops you may incline to detach after me to reinforce General Arnold in Virginia."—*MS. Letter, at sea*, March 11th.

The statement about dismantling the forts is of course an error, as only between eleven and twelve hundred of the French troops accompanied the expedition.

General Phillips commanded the detachment sent to coöperate with Arnold in Virginia. All the troops in that quarter were intended to act in concert with the plans of Lord Cornwallis. By his instructions General Phillips was directed, in case Lord Cornwallis should be successful in the Carolinas, to move up the Chesapeake with a large force to Baltimore; and to take post

upon a naval superiority, and the force of the two fleets is so equal, that we must rather hope for, than entertain an assurance of victory. The attempt, however, made by our allies to dislodge the enemy in Virginia, is certainly a bold one, and, should it fail, will nevertheless entitle them to the thanks of the public.

The army under my immediate command is so much reduced by the detachment, which I have made to coöperate with the French troops in Virginia, that I have been under the necessity of calling for the recruits, which are raised in the neighboring States. Few have yet come in; and I plainly perceive, that, unless very vigorous exertions are made,

near the Susquehanna, and on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, where the loyalists were said to be numerous. The ultimate object was to seize upon the stores and armaments in Pennsylvania, and to obstruct the trade of the Delaware. "I am preparing," said Sir Henry Clinton, "for every exertion within the compass of my very reduced force, which, after the several large detachments sent to the southward, amounts to no more than 6275 auxiliary troops, 4527 regular British, and 906 Provincials, ready for the the field."—*MS. Letter to Lord George Germaine, New York*, April 5th.

Again, Sir Henry Clinton wrote to General Phillips: "The security of the Carolinas is of the greatest moment, but the best consequences may be expected from an operation up the Chesapeake. Let the same experiment be tried there, which has hitherto been so unsuccessful at the south. Virginia has been looked upon as universally hostile; Maryland less so, but has not been tried; but in Pennsylvania, on both sides of the Susquehanna, and between the Chesapeake and Delaware, the friends of the King's interests are said to be numerous. Support should be rendered to them, and means of proving their fidelity put into their hands. If Lord Cornwallis can spare such part of his forces as to effect this movement, it is greatly to be desired."—*MS. Letter*, April 11th.

At the same time Lord Cornwallis wrote to Sir Henry Clinton: "I cannot help expressing my wishes, that the Chesapeake may become the seat of war, even, if necessary, at the expense of abandoning New York. Until Virginia is in a manner subdued, our hold upon the Carolinas must be difficult if not precarious."—*Wilmington*, April 10th.

the quotas of the several States will be not only short, but exceedingly late in the field. I must therefore entreat the interference of your Excellency's countenance and authority with the persons in the different townships, whose business it may be to procure the levies, not only to send forward those to the places of rendezvous, which have been raised, but attend to completing the deficiencies where any may have happened. There is the greater necessity for a strict compliance with the number of men required by Congress, as the Pennsylvania line, which was to have composed part of the northern army, has lately been ordered to the southward. A regular and full compliance with the specific requisition of provision is a matter of equal importance with the foregoing, to which I beg leave to call your Excellency's attention also. I have the honor to be, with most perfect respect and esteem, &c.

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.

NEW WINDSOR, 21 March, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

Upon my return to this place last night, I met your private and friendly letter of the 25th of February. I do not delay a moment to thank you for the interesting matter contained in it, and to express surprize at that part which respects a pension for my mother.

True it is, I am but little acquainted with her *present* situation or distresses, if she is under any. As

true it is, a year or two before I left Virginia (to make her latter days comfortable and free from care) I did, at her request, but at my own expence, purchase a commodious house, garden and Lotts (of her own choosing) in Fredericksburg, that she might be near my sister Lewis, her only daughter,—and did moreover agree to take her land and negroes at a certain yearly rent, to be fixed by Colo. Lewis and others (of her own nomination) which has been an annual expence to me ever since, as the estate never raised one half the rent I was to pay. Before I left Virginia I answered all her calls for money; and since that period have directed my steward to do the same. Whence her distresses can arise, therefore, I know not, never having received any complaint of his inattention or neglect on that head; tho' his inability to pay my own taxes, is such I know, as to oblige me to sell negroes for this purpose—the taxes being the most unequal (I am told) in the world—some persons paying for things of equal value, four times, nay ten times, the rate that others do.—But putting these things aside, which I could not avoid mentioning in exculpation of a presumptive want of duty on my part; confident I am that she has not a child that would not divide the last sixpence to relieve her from *real* distress. This she has been repeatedly assured of by me; and all of us I am certain, would feel much hurt, at having our mother a pensioner, while we had the means of supporting her; but in fact she has an ample income of her own.

I lament accordingly that your letter, which con-

veyed the first hint of this matter, did not come to my hands sooner; but I request, in pointed terms, if the matter is now in agitation in your Assembly, that all proceedings on it may be stopped, or in case of a decision in her favor, that it may be done away and repealed at my request.

I must defer answering your public letter till the next post. This is written in much haste to go by the present mail, which is on the point of closing. The measures I had taken previous to the date of your letter (for the reduction of Arnold's corps) were, you may be assured, every thing that was possible in my circumstances to do. If the States *will* not, or *cannot* provide me with the means, it is in vain for them to look to me for the end and accomplishment of their wishes. Bricks are not to be made without straw. As our eyes are turned to your quarter for interesting events, we have few occurrences of moment here, none pleasing. I shall only add an expression of my sincere concern for the damage and losses I hear you have sustained by that arch traitor Arnold, and my assurances of being, &c.[1]

[1] "I arrived, my dear Chevalr., at these my Quarters in the forenoon of yesterday, after passing over very bad roads, and riding thro' very foul weather without any damage. . . . G. Britain is at war with the Dutch. The manifesto and declaration of that court I have done myself the honr. to transmit to the Count de Rochambeau. We have it by *report*, that Adml. Destouches is safe arrived in Hampton Road. A number of militia under the command of Baron de Steuben were hovering round Arnold, ready to co-operate with Genl. Viomenil and the Marqs. de Lafayette, in the moment of their debarkation; the latter of whom had advanced his detachment to Annapolis, to receive more readily the protection and convoy of the Frigates of M. Destouches."—*Washington to the Chevalier de Chastellux*, 21 March, 1781.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

NEW WINDSOR, 21 March, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Upon my arrival at this place yesterday, I found your letter of the 2d., enclosing the complaint of Sundry field-officers of the Massachusetts line.[1] It is a painful reflection, that the best meant endeavors to promote the service is subject to, and often meets with, the most unfavorable constructions; and that the numerous embarrassments which the distressed situation of our affairs unavoidably involves us in, should be increased by ill-founded jealousies and groundless suspicions.

If the Gentn., who addressed you, on the 27th ulto. were hurt at the appointment of Colo. Jamat [Gimat] and Major Galvan, to command in the detachmt. which marched, and which I presume to be the case, a candid investigation of the cause would have evinced, in a moment the principle and that it was not a prediliction in favor of those gentn., or

[1] The paper containing the complaint was signed by seven field-officers. After speaking of their services and sacrifices in the army, and their devotedness to the cause of their country, they add: "We flatter ourselves, that we have gained and possess the affection of our soldiery. We have certainly so much confidence in them, that we are willing to accompany them not only on tours of honor, but to encounter with them fatigues and danger, which we think we have a right to expect. But we are sorry to have so far lost the confidence of our general officers, that, when considerably more than one half of our men have been detached for command, one field-officer only from the line has been permitted to attend them, while nine remain to endure the sensible mortification of commanding between them a less number, the greater part of whom are on detached and extra service. Things thus circumstanced must pointedly wound the feelings of a military character, and they do certainly most sensibly ours." This complaint was presented to General Heath, and was forwarded by him to the Commander-in-chief.

a want of confidence in the complainants, but the peculiar circumstances of the army that gave birth to the measure.

At the time the detachment was ordered, there was not, by the adjutant's return (and it was called for on purpose), but two regiments if my memory serves me, in camp, that had more than one field-officer, namely Hazen's and Webb's. Nothing therefore but necessity could have justified my leaving a regiment without one, at a time when the new levies were ordered to join, and momently expected from every State, and when an equal and impartial distribution of them was to be made, and the whole to be provided for. Under such circumstances, no one, I am persud., who considers the good of the service and the consequences of such a want, can blame me for taking officers, who were eligible to command and unoccupied by other duties, to accompany the detachment.

These, and these only were the reasons, why no more than one field-officer was taken from the line of Massachusetts bay, and not as I have said before from a want of confidence in them or because I preferred those that did go. Thus much justice has dictated and I insert, to remove the idea which these Gentn. seem to have imbibed of an intended slight, but they must excuse me for adding, that I concieve it to be a right inherent with command to appoint particular officers for special purposes.

That part of your letter, wch. seems to respect yourself personally, needs no explanation ; for I never can suppose that you deem it a slight, not

to have been taken from the comd. of the most important post in America wt. 4,000 men, to head a detachment from *that Post* of only 800. If this is not your allusion, I am ignorant of your meaning; but shall take this occasion to observe once for all, that I am not conscious of exercising a partiality in favor of one line, one Corps, or one man, more than another; and that where appearances have been otherwise, in the eyes of those who were unacquainted with all the circumstances, I could easily have explained them; that I never did, nor never will hurt, intentionally, the feelings of any deserving officer unless I can be justified upon genl. principles and good is to result from it—but if officers will not see into the political motives by which I am *sometimes* governed in my appointments, and which the good of the common cause renders indispensably necessary, it is unfortunate; but cannot, because it ought not, divert me from the practice of a duty, which I think promotive of the interest of the united States, and consistent with the views of that power under which I act.

I have been thus particular because it is my wish to convince every officer over whom I have the honor to be placed of the sincerity of my disposition to make him as happy as the times and our circumstances will admit of; and that can be done consistent with the observance of that steady line of conduct I ever have and mean to pursue. I am, with esteem, &c.[1]

[1] The result of this uneasiness in the officers was the sudden determination on the part of Washington to recall the detachment under Lafayette in the south,

TO WILLIAM FITZHUGH.

DEAR SIR, NEW WINDSOR. 25 March, 1781.

A few days ago brought me the honor of your favor of the 7th from Marlborough. Your other letter of Jany. the 20th came duly to hand—for both I thank you; without offering an apology for suffering the latter to remain unacknowledged till this time, because I am satisfied you will attribute my silence to any cause rather than disrespect, and to none sooner than the true one—vizt., the load of business which continually presses upon me. It was with sincere concern that I heard of the injury you sustained in your property at the mouth of the Patuxent, but it is only adding another specimen to the catalogue of British clemency and wasted generosity.

and to form a new one which would determine the grievances. The situation of Greene, however, led to a change of orders. See *Washington to Lafayette*, 6 April, 1781.

In a private letter to Baron Steuben Washington wrote on April 30th: "At this moment, I will frankly confess to you, I am extremely perplexed and distrest at the uneasiness & discontent which prevail among all the Officers of the Reg't of Lt. Infantry to which Major Galvan is now annexed, with respect to the conduct of that Gentleman—From their remonstrances, and the Universal report, it appears that his behavior has been so untoward & disobliging, as to create the greatest disgust in all the Corps, & as will tend essentially to injure the service—*This*, together with his having been in the Light Corps, the last Campaign, would induce me to order him to be relieved, if the consideration of his being a foreigner (to whom you know, I wish every suitable attention & encouragement to be paid), an idea of his personal abilities & respectable connections, did not prevent.

"Knowing your friendship for, & influence with Major Galvan to be very considerable, I sincerely wish him, thro you, to be persuaded to adopt such a line of conduct as will make him more agreeable to the Corps as well as more serviceable to the Public—Otherwise, however splendid his abilities & military talents may be, they will be entirely useless to himself & the world—And in the issue, I fear, I shall be compelled to supersede him, in order to prevent the most disagreeable consequences."

The accession of Maryland to the confederation—and the relinquishment of the claim of Virginia to the Lands west of Ohio, are events which are exceedingly pleasing to me, but I am not sufficiently acquainted with the powers of civil government under the present constitutions of the several States to determine how far they are able to obtain men for the war, or for three years by coercion—nor am I enough acquainted with the abilities of them to declare what sums they ought to have given to soldiers under this description, in preference to a draft of men for a shorter term ; this, however, I am decided in, that the latter is the most expensive, & least effectual mode that ever was devised to carry on a war which is like to become a war of finance—and that no funds within our reach can support it long. I speak upon the best ground when I assert this, because no day nor hour arrives without bringing with it some evidence in support of the truth of the observation. To this cause also the prolongation of the war, the wretched state of our finances, and every capital misfortune that has befallen us may be traced.

I as little scruple to add, that unless the powers of Congress are made competent to all the purposes of war we are doing no more than wasting our time & spending our treasure to very little purpose, for it is impossible to apply the strength and resources of this country while one State complys with, another rejects, and the majority of them change or mutilate the requisitions of that body—hence the willing States are capitally injured, if not ruined—hence pro-

ceed distrust, jealousy, & dissatisfaction, and the impossibility of either projecting or executing (with certainty) any plan whatsoever—hence proceed all those delays, which to people at a distance, and unacquainted with circumstances, are altogether unaccountable—and hence it is we incur useless expence, because we do not bring our force, and means, into operation at the same time, some being exhausted, before others are obtained. * * *

We wait with much solicitude advices from the southern army; our last accounts from that quarter were less gloomy than the former, but not less equivocal & distressing. I have heard nothing from Genl. Greene since the 28th of Feb'y, nor of him (with precision) since the 2d Inst. Matters were so critically circumstanced at that time as to add pain to impatience. Equally ignorant, and equally anxious am I, with respect to the French fleet under the command of the Chevr. Destouches—no accounts of whom have I received (but vague ones through the channel of Rivington's Paper) since he left Newport. At York Town in Virginia there was no intelligence of him on the 15th.

Private. It is to be lamented, greatly lamented, that the French commanders at Newport did not adopt the measure of sending the Fleet and a detachm't of their land force to Chesapeake bay when I first proposed it to them (in the moment I received the first cert'n information of the damage done to the British at Gardiner's bay). Had the expedition been undertaken at that time, nothing could have saved

Arnold's corps (during the weakened state of the British ships) from destruction. Instead of this, a small detachment only was sent from the fleet, which, as I foretold, would have returned as they went, had it not been for the accidental meeting of the Romulus, and the vessels under her convoy. But as there is no rectifying past errors—and as it is our true policy to stand well with friends on whom we so much depend, I relate this in confidence.[1]

[1] See *Washington to Rochambeau* 30 April, 1781.

On March 30th, Washington received a letter written by Chevalier Destouches on the 19th, describing an engagement between his fleet and Admiral Arbuthnot's fleet on the 16th. The British comprised eight ships, and three frigates, while the French had the same number of ships, but were inferior in weight of metal. The engagement began at two o'clock in the afternoon, and lasted for more than an hour. The English then drew off, and the French finding one of their ships in a distressed condition, did not pursue, and decided that it would be inexpedient to continue to Virginia, whither the English had gone. Claude Blanchard, the French commissary, who accompanied this detachment wrote of this naval engagement: "What is certain is that the English had the worst in this affair, by which, nevertheless, we did not profit, because the Conquerant could not repair her damage quickly enough. The captain of this ship also made some mistakes in manœuvring, and lastly, M. Destouches, who was in command for the first time, and who had been unexpectedly called to this post by the death of M. de Ternay, was afraid of the court, and did not display all the energy that was requisite." Washington took his disappointment with coolness and good judgment, writing to Destouches on the 31st:

"Though you have not been able to accomplish the object, which you had in view, you have merited the thanks of every American by the boldness of the attempt, and by the gallantry and good conduct displayed through the whole course of the engagement. I will confess to you, Sir, I was never sanguine in my expectations, after I saw the British fleet follow you so closely from Gardiner's Bay. I knew that the success of the expedition depended almost entirely upon your arrival in the Chesapeake before Admiral Arbuthnot, a circumstance in which the winds and weather had more influence than valor or skill. Had it depended upon the latter, I should have had perfect confidence, and the event has justified my opinion."

"The attempt of the Chevr. Destouches at the time he sailed was bold and enterprising. For this and political reasons, and because I know it will be grateful to the French general and admiral, I take the liberty of hinting to you

Mrs. Washington makes a tender of her compliments to yourself and Mrs. Fitzhugh to which please to add those of, Dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARMSTRONG.

NEW WINDSOR, 26 March, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

* * * I received with much pleasure the account of your recovered health, and sincerely wish it may be of long continuance and much usefulness to yourself and country.

We ought not to look back, unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors, and for the purpose of profiting by dear bought experience. To enveigh against things that are past and irremediable, is unpleasing; but to steer clear of the shelves and rocks we have struck upon, is the part of wisdom, equally as incumbent on political as other men, who have their own little bark, or that of others, to navigate through the intricate paths of life, or the trackless ocean, to the haven of security and rest.

Our affairs are brought to an awful crisis, that the hand of Providence, I trust, may be more conspicuous in our deliverance. The many remarkable interpositions of the divine government, in the hours of our deepest distress and darkness, have been too luminous to suffer me to doubt the happy issue of

the propriety (if it is not already done) of Congress paying them a compliment on the occasion. It may be a happy effect, which is the only apology I can offer for the freedom of suggesting it."—*Washington to Alexander McDougall*, 31 March, 1781. The French fleet returned to Newport on the 26th.

the present contest[1]; but the period for its accomplishment may be too far distant for a person of my years, whose morning and evening hours, and every moment (unoccupied by business), pants for retirement, and for those domestic and rural enjoyments, which in my estimation far surpass the highest pageantry of this world. * * *

I am sorry to hear, that the recruiting business in your State is clogged with so many embarrassments. It is perhaps the greatest of the great evils attending this contest, that States as well as individuals had rather wish well, than act well; had rather see a thing done, than do it, or contribute their just proportion to the doing it. This conduct is not only injurious to the common cause, but in the end most expensive to themselves; besides the distrusts and jealousies, which are sown by such conduct. To expect brick without straw is idle, and yet I am called upon, with as much facility to furnish men and means for every service and every want, as if every iota required of the States had been furnished, and the whole was at my disposal; when the fact is, I am scarcely able to provide a garrison for West Point, or to feed the men that are there. This, and ten thousand reasons, which I could assign, prove the necessity of something more than recommendatory powers in Congress. If that body is not vested with a controuling power in matters of common concern, and for the

[1] "We have, as you very justly observe, abundant reasons to thank Providence for its many favorable interpositions in our behalf. It has at times been my only dependence, for all other resources seemed to have failed us."—*Washington to William Gordon*, 9 March, 1781.

great purposes of war, I do not scruple to give it decidedly as my opinion, that it will be impossible to prosecute it to any *good effect*. Some States are capitally injured, if not ruined, by their own exertions and the neglects of others; while by these irregularities the strength and resources of the country never are, nor can be, employed to advantage. But I have exceeded the bounds of a common letter, and shall trespass no longer, than while I can assure you, that I am, with every sentiment of esteem, regard, and affection, &c.

TO BENJAMIN HARRISON.[1]

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
27 March, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

On my return from Newport, I found your favor of the 16th of February with its inclosures, at Head Quarters. I regret exceedingly that I could not have the pleasure of seeing you, not only from personal motives, but because I could have entered upon the subject of your mission in a much more free and full manner than is proper to be committed to paper.

I very early saw the difficulties and dangers to which the southern States would be exposed for want of resources of cloathing, arms and ammunition, and recommended magazines to be established, as ample as their circumstances would admit. It is true they are not so full of men as the northern States, but they ought for that reason to have been more assidu-

[1] Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates.

ous in raising a permanent force, to have been always ready, because they cannot draw a head of men together as suddenly as their exigences may require. That policy has unhappily not been pursued, either here or there, and we are now suffering from the remnant of a British army what they could not in the beginning accomplish with their forces at the highest.

As your requisitions go to men, arms, ammunition and cloathing, I shall give you a short detail of our situation and prospects, as to the first, and of our supplies and expectations as to the three last.

Men. By the expiration of the times of service of the old troops, by the discharge of the levies engaged for the campaign only, and by the unfortunate dissolution of the Pennsylvanian line, I was left previous to the march of the detachment under the command of the Marquis de la Fayette, with a garrison barely sufficient for the security of West Point, and two regiments in Jersey to support the communication between the Delaware and North River. The York troops I had been obliged to send up for the security of the frontiers of that State. Weak, however, as we were, I determined to attempt the dislodgment of Arnold in conjunction with the French fleet and army, and made the detachment to which I have alluded.

In my late tour to the eastward, I found the accounts I had received of the progress of recruiting in those States, had been much exaggerated; and I fear we shall, in the end, be obliged again to take a great proportion of their quotas in levies for the campaign,

instead of soldiers for three years or for the war. The regiments of New York having been reduced to two, they have but few infantry to raise. Jersey depends upon voluntary enlistments upon a contracted bounty, and I cannot therefore promise myself much success from the mode. The Pennsylvania line you know is ordered to compose part of the southern army. General Wayne is so sanguine as to suppose he will soon be able to move on with 1000 or 1200 men, but I fancy he rather overrates the matter.

You will readily perceive, from the foregoing state, that there is little probability of adding to the force already ordered to the southward. For should the battalions from New Hampshire to New Jersey inclusive be compleated (a thing not to be expected) we shall, after the necessary detachments for the frontiers and other purposes are made, have an army barely sufficient to keep the enemy in check at New York. Except this is done, they will have nothing to hinder them from throwing further reinforcements to the southward, and to be obliged to follow by land every detachment of their army, which they always make by sea, will only end in a pointless dissipation of what may now be called the northern army. You may be assured that the most powerful diversion that can be made in favor of the southern States, will be a respectable force in the neighborhood of New York. I have hitherto been speaking of our own resources. Should a reinforcement arrive to the French fleet and army, the face of matters may be entirely changed.

Arms. I do not find that we can, at any rate, have more than 2000 stand of arms to spare, perhaps not so many ; for should the battalions which are to compose this army be compleat, or nearly so, they will take all that are in repair or repairable. The 2000 stand came in the Alliance from France, and I keep them apart for an emergency.

Ammunition. Our stock of ammunition, though competent to the defensive is, by a late estimate of the commanding officer of artillery, vastly short of an offensive operation of any consequence. Should circumstances put it in our power to attempt such an one, we must depend upon the private magazines of the States, and upon our allies. On the contrary should the defensive plan be determined upon, what ammunition can be spared will be undoubtedly sent to the southward.

Cloathing. Of cloathing we are in a manner exhausted. We have not enough for the few recruits which may be expected, and except that which has been so long talked of and looked for from France should arrive, the troops must next winter go naked, unless their States can supply them.

From the foregoing representation you will perceive that the proportion of the Continental army, already allotted to southern service is as much as, from present appearances can be spared for that purpose, and that a supply of arms, ammunition, or cloathing of any consequence, must depend in a great measure upon future purchases or importation.

Nothing which is within the compass of my power

shall be wanting to give support to the southern States; but you may readily conceive how irksome a thing it must be to me to be called upon for assistance, when I have not the means of affording it. I am, &c.

TO THE BOARD OF WAR.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
30 March, 1781.

GENTLEMEN:

I have been honored with your favor of the 22d instant inclosing the heads of two plans for the incorporation of the departments of quartermaster general and Commissaries General of Purchases and Issues and that of the Commissary of Prisoners in some degree, the whole to be under the direction of the Quarter Master General. If there is an absolute necessity for such a reform, I do not hesitate in pronouncing in favor of the second plan, because, by it the three great departments are united under one common head; whereas by the first, the commissariate in some measure exists, which would lead to confusion and intricacy in transacting the business.

The Board are very justly pleased to observe that "all changes are not reformations, and that great caution should be used in making them, *especially at*

[1] A letter, intercepted by the British, and printed in the *New York Gazette*, 4 April, 1781. It will also be found in the *Annual Register*, 1781.

"The intercepted letter alluded to, said to be written by me to a gentleman at the southward, I suppose must have been an official one addressed to the Speaker of the Assembly of Virginia, in which our situation in many respects was pretty plainly delineated, but you may be assured there were ideas held up in that letter which were by no means grateful to the enemy, which have embarrassed them exceedingly, and which will be a sufficient reason to prevent their publishing the contents of it at large to the world."—*Washington to General Parsons*, 3 May, 1781.

the opening of a Campaign." Col. Pickering has, I should suppose, informed himself of the sentiments of his deputies upon the plan he has proposed, otherwise, should it be adopted, it will be in their power to fix terms for themselves, or confusion would immediately ensue by the resignation of all those who would not undertake an additional trouble of office without an addition of salary. The effect of which at the present advanced season may easily be conceived. Œconomy is undoubtedly the sole motive and end of the plan proposed. Now if that cannot be introduced, and in a very extensive way too, it will be well to consider whether we had not best begin by the uniting, as formerly, the departments of purchasing and issuing commissary under one set of officers: for as the Board have again observed, double sets of officers have been found productive of expence, but little or no check upon each other. By the second plan, an officer under the character of superintendent, who will be something similar in duty to the commissary of purchases at present, is instituted. He must be allowed, it is presumed, a certain number of clerks or assistants. The Quarter Master General is also to be allowed a suitable number of clerks to enable him to transact the additional load of business thrown upon him. Now before a determination is formed, let a calculation be made of the difference of expence between a Commissary General of Purchases, with his assistants, &c., both at fixed posts and with the army, and a superintendent of provisions, with his clerks and assistants, and the additional number of clerks necessary to the Quartermaster General, should

to undertake the management of all the departments. If the saving to the public should not appear very considerable, by the abolition of the commissariate altogether, will it be worth while to risque the mischiefs, which may arise from an attempt unknown in other services? or will it be worth while to add for a while, to the load of business which, in the embarrassed state of our affairs, presses upon the Quarter Master? For although, as he observes, he already has the care and trouble of drawing from fixed magazines all the provision deposited at them, yet he would find, upon experiment, a thousand little perplexities incident to the Commissary's department, of which, perhaps, he is not aware. While I applaud the motives on which he offers to undertake the business, I cannot help expressing my fears that he is about to undertake too much: for I very well know, that when our public affairs were in better train, the Quartermaster General found it sufficiently difficult to execute the civil and military duties of his office, and an active campaign will give him much more of the latter than he has yet experienced, or may have an idea of from the inactivity of the last. * * *

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

NEW WINDSOR, 4 April, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Every day convinces me, that the enemy are determined to bend their force against the southern States, and that we must support them powerfully

from this quarter, or they will be lost. Except such support is given in time, it will be ineffectual. The enemy will not only have established themselves in posts, but in the affections of many of the people. The Pennsylvania line is already ordered to the southern army, and will march thither in detachment, as it is reassembled and recruited. I should not hesitate immediately to order a further reinforcement, could I do it with prudence; but we are so extremely weak, (not more than four hundred recruits from all the States having yet come in, about one hundred of which from Massachusetts,) that, although the enemy have lately sent off another detachment of at least fifteen hundred men under the command of General Phillips, I do not think myself justifiable in doing it under present circumstances. But, that the measure may be adopted as early as possible, I must desire and call upon you, in the most positive manner to send forward every man from Massachusetts that you can collect. The urgency of the times requires that every exertion should be made to check the enemy in the rapidity of their progress to the southward.

You will have heard of the disappointment in the expedition against Arnold. General Greene has had a general engagement with Lord Cornwallis,[1] from which, though he suffered a defeat, he might ultimately derive advantages, had his Lordship no prospect of fresh succors. But I have scarcely a doubt,

[1] The battle of Guilford Court-House, in North Carolina, fought on the 15th of March.

that the detachment under General Phillips is intended for that quarter. Should they form a junction, and I see nothing to hinder it, General Greene's present force will not enable him to give any effectual opposition. He had two hundred and ninety out of his small body of Continental troops killed, wounded, and missing in the late action.[1] You very well know, that the collecting militia depends entirely upon the prospects of the day. If favorable, they throng in to you; if not, they will not move.

I perceive that you have, by a late public order, detained all the Massachusetts officers, who were then in the State; I suppose, that they might assist in bringing forward the levies. You will keep only as many as are absolutely necessary for that purpose, and send the others to their regiments. They are exceedingly wanted, there being scarcely a sufficient number in camp for ordinary duties. I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 6 April, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Since my letter to you of yesterday, I have attentively considered of what vast importance it will be to reinforce General Greene as speedily as possible; more especially as there can be little doubt, but the

[1] This number included only the soldiers. By the adjutant's return there were also thirty-one officers, commissioned and non-commissioned, and eight drummers and fifers, among the killed, wounded, and missing.

General Greene's official letter to Congress describing this action is contained in the *Remembrancer*, vol. xii., p. 37.

detachment under General Phillips, if not part of that now under the command of General Arnold, will ultimately join or in some degree coöperate with Lord Cornwallis. I have communicated to the general officers, at present with the army, my sentiments on the subject; and they are unanimously of opinion, that the detachment under your command should proceed and join the southern army. Your being already three hundred miles advanced, which is nearly half way, is the reason which operates against any which can be offered in favor of marching that detachment back and forming another—a plan which I once had in my own mind, as it was hastily formed and neither officers or men might have imagined they were to leave their corps for so great a length of time, but, as matters are circumstanced, private inconveniences must give way to the public good and you will therefore, immediately upon the receipt of this, turn the detachment to the southward. Inform General Greene, that you are upon your march to join him, and take his direction as to your route, when you begin to approach him. Previous to that, you will be guided by your own judgment, and by the roads on which you will be most likely to find subsistence for the troops and horses. It will be well to advise Governor Jefferson of your intended march through the State of Virginia; or perhaps it might answer a good purpose, were you to go forward to Richmond yourself, after putting the troops in motion and having made some necessary arrangements for their progress.

You will now take the light artillery and smallest mortars, with their stores and the musket cartridges, with you. But let these follow under a proper escort, rather than impede the march of the detachment, which ought to move as expeditiously as possible without injury to them. The heavy artillery and stores you will leave at some proper and safe place, if it cannot be conveniently transported to Christien River, from whence it will be easily got to Philadelphia. You may leave it to the option of Lieutenant-Colonel Stevens to proceed or not, as he may think proper. His family are in peculiar circumstances, and he left it in the expectation of being absent but a short time. Should there be other officers under similar circumstances, you may make them the same offers, and they shall be relieved.

I will now mention to you in confidence the reason, which operated with me more than almost any other, in favor of recalling your detachment and forming another. It was the uneasiness occasioned among the field-officers of those regiments which furnished the men, upon the appointment of Colonel Gimat and Major Galvan to commands in the corps. They presented a memorial to me upon the subject, and I gave them the true reason, which was, that the regiments in their lines were so extremely thin of field-officers of their own, that necessity, if nothing else, dictated the measure. I have heard nothing of the discontent lately; but, should I find it revive again, upon its being known that the corps is to continue together, I shall be obliged, for peace' sake, to

relieve those two gentlemen by officers properly belonging to the lines from which the regiments are formed. You will therefore prepare them for such an event, and tell them candidly the reasons, founded principally upon their having already had their tour in the infantry. Should they be relieved, they will probably incline to continue with the southern army. There is as much or more probability of their finding employ there, than with us, as we shall from all appearances remain inactive.

I am, my dear Marquis, &c.

TO COUNT ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
7 April, 1781.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of the 31st ulto. Your remarks upon the uncertainty of operations which depend upon a combination of Land and Sea forces, except there is a decisive superiority over the enemy as to the latter, are judicious, and consonant to the Ideas which I had ever entertained upon the subject.

Upon maturely considering the offer which your Excellency has been pleased to make of marching all your force to this place, except 1200 Men to be aided by 3000 Militia for the security of the Fleet, I am of opinion that it ought under present circumstances and appearances to be deferred, as it would be putting you perhaps to an unnecessary trouble,

and would, besides the expences incident to calling out so large a body of Militia tend to injure the completion of the Continental Battalions by recruits, as the Militia service is preferred by the peasantry to the Continental, the pay being greater the duty less —and the discipline more relaxed. My reasons for waving your Excellency's offer, at the present time are briefly as follow. I do not look upon the French troops *essentially necessary* at this place untill an operation against New York shall have been determined upon, or untill we shall have been obliged to make so large detachments to the Southward that we shall have occasion for them to assist in securing the post of West point and its dependencies—the communication from the Delaware to the North River and affording cover to the Country within reach of the enemy's marauding parties. Altho' I have, upon finding that the enemy have sent a reinforcement of about 1500 to the Southward, ordered the Marquis de la Fayette to proceed with the detachment under his command and join General Greene, I hope I shall be able, with my remaining force and the Recruits which now begin to come in, to effect the latter purposes more especially as I can upon an emergency, suddenly call in a respectable Body of Militia from the Adjacent Country. It does not appear to me that an enterprise so weighty as that against New York can be decided upon untill we hear what reinforcements of Men and Ships may be expected from Europe.—I therefore think that the troops under your Excellency's command may

remain in their present position untill the arrival of the Viscount de Rochambeau, which I hope may be soon, or some other intelligence from Europe, or till the situation of our Southn. Affairs become yet more critical.—But as it may have an effect upon the fears of the enemy in New York, and hinder them from making further detachments to the Southward I beg your Excellency to circulate a report that you are soon to join this Army, and to make some demonstrations of preparing for a march.

Indeed the approaching season—if it should not be our unhappy lot to spend another inactive campaign—will well warrant every necessary preparation for the field be the theatre of Action where it may; which will not only countenance the report but actually facilitate the measure if events should render it necessary to carry it into execution which is by no means improbable. * * *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
8 April, 1781.

SIR,

The enclosed return, made up to the first of the month, will show the number of recruits, which have joined this part of the Continental army since the formation of it upon the new establishment. My requests to the executives of the several States have been *earnest*, and my orders to the officers in them have been pointed and *positive*, to send forward the recruits as fast as possible. What to expect, or

rather to apprehend, from these delays, Congress can more easily conceive than I can describe. Some States, I am told, despairing of getting their quotas for the war, or three years, are resorting to the old expedient of temporary enlistments, while impediments of another kind withhold the recruits from the army in others.

The bare relation of these facts, without combining other circumstances of equal magnitude and uncertainty, or adding to them the difficulties with which we are surrounded for want of money, will convince Congress of the impracticability of my fixing at this time on any definitive plan of campaign, and of my inability to carry into effect those, which have heretofore been the objects of contemplation. They will readily see, that our future operations depend upon contingencies, and that our determinations must be the result of the moment, dependent upon circumstances.

In this view of matters here, the progress of the enemy under Lord Cornwallis, and in consideration of the reinforcement which has lately gone to him, I have judged it expedient to order the Marquis de Lafayette to proceed with his detachment to the southern army, and put himself under the orders of Major-General Greene. The greatest objection I had to the measure, circumstanced as things now are, was, that the detachment was not formed for the campaign, or for so distant a service as that on which they are now ordered; consequently neither officers nor men were prepared for it; but the urgent calls for succor to the southern States, the proximity of this corps to them, the expedition with which it can

join the southern army, and the public expense that will be saved by its advance, have overcome all less considerations in deciding upon it. I wish the march of the Pennsylvania troops could be facilitated, and that Moylan's cavalry could be recruited, equipped, and marched without delay; for every judicious officer I have conversed with from the southward, and all the representations I received from thence, confirm me in the opinion, that great advantages are to be derived from a superior cavalry. Without magazines, and with an interrupted communication, I do not see how Lord Cornwallis could have subsisted his army, had we outnumbered him in horse.

I think it my duty to inform Congress, that there is great dissatisfaction at this time in the York line for want of pay. Near sixteen months', I am told, is due to it. If it were practicable to give these and the Jersey troops, if they are in the same predicament, a small portion of their pay, it might stop desertions, which are frequent, and avert greater evils, which are otherwise to be apprehended. The four eastern States have given a temporary relief to their troops, which makes the case of the others, those of York particularly, appear more distressing and grievous to them. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO COLONEL JOHN LAURENS, AT PARIS.

NEW WINDSOR, 9 April, 1781.

MY DEAR LAURENS,

Colo. Armand, who was charged with the delivery of many letters to you from the Marquis de Lafay-

14

[1] Read in Congress, 12 April, 1781.

ette, imparting to his friends and the ministry of France your mission, unfortunately arrived at Boston after you had Sailed. By him I gave you an acct. of the revolt of part of the Jersey Troops, Arnold's Expedition to Virginia, Leslie's arrival at Charles Town, and such other matters as occurred after your departure.

Since that period several interesting events have happened; some favorable, others adverse. Among the first may be reckoned Morgan's brilliant action with Tarleton; among the latter, the advantages gained by Lord Cornwallis over General Greene. The official accts. of these I enclose to you. Cornwallis, after the defeat of Tarleton, destroyed his wagons, and made a violent effort to recover his prisoners, but, failing therein moved equally light and rapidly against General Greene, who, (though he had formed a junction with Morgan,) was obliged to retreat before him into Virginia. Whether from despair of recovering his prisoners, of bringing Greene to a general action, or because he conceived his own situation critical, I do not take upon me to determine; but the fact is, that here commenced Cornwallis' retrograde movements, and Greene's advance from the Roanoke to the place of action.

On the first notice of the storm, which happened on the 22d of Jany., and of its effects, I intimated to the French Genl. the possibility and importance of improving the opportunity in an attempt upon Arnold. When I received a more certn. acct. of the total loss of the Culloden, and the dismasting of the

Bedford, two 74-gun ships belonging to the British Fleet at Gardiner's Bay, I immediately put in motion, under the comd. of ye Marqs. de Lafayette, *as large a part of my small force here, as I could with prudence detach,*[1] to proceed to the Head of Elk, and made with all expedition, a proposal to the Count de Rochambeau and the Chevr. Destouches for a coöperation in Virginia with the whole of the fleet of our allies and a part of their land force. Before my proposition arrived, in consequence of an application to him from Philadelphia, the Chevr. Destouches had sent a ship of the line and two or three frigates to Chesapeake Bay, which not only retarded the plan I had proposed (by awaiting their return), but ultimately defeated the project; as the enemy in the mean time remasted the Bedford with those taken out of the Culloden, and, following the French fleet, arrived off the Capes of Virginia before it; where a naval combat, glorious for the French, who were inferior in ships and guns, but unprofitable for us, who were disappointed of our object, was the issue.

The failure of this expedition, which was most flattering in the commencement, is much to be regretted; because a successful blow in that quarter would, in all probability, have given a decisive turn to our affairs in all the Southern States; because it has been attended with considerable expense on our part, and much inconvenience to the State of Virginia, by the assembling of its militia; because the world are disappointed at not seeing Arnold in Gibbets; and, above all,

[1] The italicized parts of this letter were written in cypher.

because we stood in need of something to keep us afloat, till the result of your mission is known; for, be assured, my dear Laurens, that day does not follow night more certainly, than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion, that, without a foreign loan, our present force, (which is but the remnant of an army,) cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased and in readiness for another.

The observations contained in my letter to you of the 15th of January last are verified every moment; and, if France delays a timely and powerful aid in this critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing, should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the Balle.; not from choice, but from hard and absolute necessity; for you may rely on it as a fact, that we cannot transport the provisions from the States in which they are assessed to the army, because we cannot pay the teamsters, who will no longer work for certificates. It is equally certain, that our Troops are approaching fast to nakedness, and that we have nothing to cloathe them with; that our Hospitals are without medicines and our sick without nutriment except such as well men eat; That all our public works are at a stand, and the artificers disbanding. But why need I run into the detail, when it may be declared in a word, that we are at the end of our tether, and that now or never our deliverance

must come. While, alas, how easy would it be to retort the enemy's own game upon them, if it could be made to comport with the genl. plan of the war to keep a superior Fleet always in these Seas, and France would put us in a conditn. to be active by advancing us money. The ruin of the enemy's schemes would then be certain; the bold game they are now playing would be the mean to effect it; for they would be reduced to the necessity of concentring their force at capital points, thereby giving up all the advantages they have gained in the Southern States, or be vulnerable everywhere.

Such of the Pensylvania line, as had reassembled and were recruited, *say about 1,000,* were ordered, *the middle of Feby., to join the Southern army;* and since the disappointment of our enterprise against Arnold, I have directed the detachment under the comd. of the Marqs. de Lafayette *to proceed thither; but how either can march, without money or credit, is more than I can tell.* With every wish for your success, and a safe and speedy return, and with every sentiment of esteem and affection, I am, dear Sir, &c. * * *

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
10 April, 1781.

SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your Excellency's letter of the 6th instant only two hours ago. We are greatly indebted to the Chevalier Destouches for the disposition he shows to undertake the expedition to Penobscot, and to you for your readiness to fur-

nish a detachment of troops for the same purpose. The object is certainly worth attention, and if it can be effected will be very agreeable to the States, particularly to those of the East. M. Destouches can best judge, from the situation of the enemy's fleet, how far it may be attempted with prudence; and your Excellency, from the information you have recently received, what number of troops will be sufficient for the enterprise. I am persuaded it will be calculated how far it is probable the enemy may follow with a part of their fleet; whether the post can be carried by a *coup de main*, or may require so much time as to make it likely the operation will be interrupted before its conclusion, in case of a superior squadron being sent by the enemy; what possibility there is of protection, or a safe retreat for the ships, and even for the land force, through an unsettled country. All these are points too important not to have been well weighed, and your conversations with the Massachusetts deputies will have been able to enlighten you upon them.

The confidence I have in your judgment assures to you the concurrence of my sentiments, in whatever you may do on the occasion. I will only take the liberty to remark two things; one, that it appears to me frigates, without any ships of the line, will answer the purpose as well as with them, and less will be risked by dividing the body of the fleet. Frigates, (including the forty-fours,) will afford a safe escort to the troops against any thing now in those seas, and with respect to a detachment from

the enemy's fleet, it would always be proportioned to the force we should send, and if we have two sixty-fours, they would even be an object for their whole fleet. The other observation I would make is that as despatch is essential to success, it will in my opinion be advisable not to depend on any coöperation of the militia, but to send at once such a force from your army, as you deem completely adequate to a speedy reduction of the post.

The country in the neighborhood of Penobscot is too thinly inhabited to afford any resource of militia there; and to assemble and convey them from remote places would announce your design, retard your operations, and give leisure to the enemy to counteract you. Indeed, I would recommend, for the sake of secrecy, to conceal your determination from the State itself. These hints you will be pleased to make use of only so far as they appear to be well founded. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

P. S. I enclose a piece of intelligence just received from the President of Congress.

[1] The British had contrived to keep a fortified post at Penobscot, which at this time contained a garrison of about three hundred and fifty men. The Council of Massachusetts thought a good opportunity now presented itself, while the British fleet was in the Chesapeake, to employ the idle hours of the French in an enterprise against Penobscot. Proposals to that effect were made through a deputation, and accepted. M. Destouches agreed to furnish two sixty-fours, two frigates, and a smaller vessel, and preparations were immediately begun. A land force of six hundred men was offered by Count de Rochambeau, and also four mortars, and four twenty-four-pounders. The Chevalier de Chastellux was to command. At first it was expected that Massachusetts would furnish militia; but this part of the plan was given up, and Count de Rochambeau proposed to enlarge his force to eight hundred men. After all the arrangements had been put in train, the project was finally abandoned, in consequence of the apprehension of M. Destouches, that a

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
11 April, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Your favor dated at Elk the 8th instant reached me at ten o'clock last evening. While I give you credit for the manœuvre by which you removed the British ships from before Annapolis, I am sorry, as matters are circumstanced, that you have put yourself so much further from the point, which now of necessity becomes the object of your destination. Whether General Phillips remains in Virginia or goes further southward, he must be opposed by a force more substantial than militia alone; and you will for that reason immediately open a communication with General Greene, inform him of the numbers, situation, and probable views of the enemy in Virginia, and take his directions as to marching forward to join him, or remaining there to keep a watch upon the motions of Phillips, should he have formed a junction with Arnold at Portsmouth.

Every difficulty, so far as respects the wants of the officers and men, and the uneasinesses, which might arise upon their being ordered upon a more distant service than they expected, were foreseen, and would have been removed by recalling the detachment and forming another, had not the reasons of a public nature, which were mentioned in my letter of the 6th, outweighed all private considerations.

superior British naval force would come upon some parts of his squadron while in a divided state.—*MS. Letters of Rochambeau and Destouches*, April 6th, 7th, 15th.

You must endeavor to get shoes which will be essentially necessary before you can move from Philadelphia; and, if you will cause a return to be made of such articles, as will probably be wanting in the course of the campaign, I will endeavor to forward them from hence, with a proportion of any stores, which may have been sent on by the States for their troops. If the officers will write back to their friends here for any additional baggage, of which they may stand in need, it shall be forwarded under careful conductors. The difficulties, which you will experience on the score of provision and transportation, would have been common to any other body of troops. They will I know be great, but I depend much upon your assiduity and activity.

Had I have had the most distant prospect of such an operation as you speak of, I should have looked upon your detachment as essential to the undertaking; but I can assure you, without entering into a detail of reasons, which I cannot commit to paper, that I have not at present an idea of being able to effect such a matter.[1] This had very considerable weight in the determination of the general officers and myself; for we would have been very happy in an opportunity of succoring the southern states by a diversion, could it have been attempted with any tolerable hope of success.

The small remains of the Jersey line seem necessary to form a head, to which the recruits, if any are obtained, may unite themselves. That line stands

[1] An attempt upon New York.

next for detachment, and therefore it is more than probable that it may soon become necessary to send the whole to the southward. But the reason, which I have just mentioned, operates in favor of keeping the remainder as long as possible. I shall be glad to hear from you, the time of your setting out from Elk, your prospects of getting on and the temper of the troops; and, above all, I shall ever be happy in knowing that you are well, and that every thing contributes to your happiness and satisfaction, being very truly and sincerely, my dear Marquis, &c.

P. S. You seem aware of the danger of attempting a passage down the Chesapeak by water. I will add my opinion that it is not on any account to be attempted.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 16 April, 1781.

SIR,

Previous to the receipt of your letter,[1] I had directed the commissary of prisoners to renew a proposal, which was some time since made to the enemy, for exchanging General Burgoyne, and a balance of pri-

[1] *President of Congress to General Washington:* "I have the honor of transmitting to your Excellency the enclosed resolve of the 3d instant, directing the recall of Lieutenant-General Burgoyne, and all other officers, prisoners of war, now absent on their paroles from America, to return immediately.

"It is proper to inform your Excellency, that this resolution is adopted in consequence of information, that the late President Laurens is confined in the Tower of London, as a state criminal, under pretext of his being guilty of treasonable practices. Should this resolution embarrass or impede any meas-

vate prisoners due to us, for the residue of our officers on Long Island, and as many of the southern officers as would make up the difference. My motives for this proposal were these. General Burgoyne is said to be in ill health; his death would deprive us in exchanges of the value of one thousand and forty private men, or officers equivalent, according to the tariff which has been settled. I thought it advisable not to risk so considerable a loss, when his exchange would give relief to a number of our officers in captivity, and disembarrass the public of the inconvenience of maintaining them there.

The moment I received your letter, I wrote to Mr. Skinner, countermanding his instructions. I believe the countermand will arrive before he has done any thing in the matter; but if it does not, I am persuaded the enemy will again reject the proposal. As soon as I hear from him, if things are situated as I expect, I will execute immediately the order for the recall of General Burgoyne. To the best of my recollection, all the officers in Europe on parole have been exchanged. I have the honor to be, &c.

ures your Excellency may have adopted relative or preparatory to a general exchange of prisoners, it is taken for granted that you will please to represent the same to Congress, previously to any proceedings for carrying the resolve into execution."—April 5th.

Notice of the above requisition was accordingly communicated to Sir Henry Clinton by General Washington, with a request that the necessary steps might be taken for a speedy compliance with it. In consequence of the fact made known by General Washington, that he had proposed an exchange for General Burgoyne, Congress rescinded their resolve respecting his recall, and authorized the exchange to be completed.—*Secret Journals*, April 23d. General Clinton was then requested to countermand the order, if it had already been transmitted to England.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

NEW WINDSOR, 18 April, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your private letter of the 18th ulto. came safe to hand.[1] Altho' the honors of the field did not fall to your lot, I am convinced you deserved them. The chances of war are various, and the best concerted measures, and the most flattering prospects, may and often do deceive us; especially while we are in the power of militia. The motives wch. induced you to seek an action with Lord Cornwallis, are supportable upon the best military principles; and the consequences, if you can prevent the dissipation of your Troops, will no doubt be fortunate. Every support, that it is in my power to give you from this army,

[1] *From General Greene's Letter:* "Our force, as you will see by the returns, was respectable, and the probability of not being able to keep it long in the field, and the difficulty of subsisting men in this exhausted country, together with the great advantages which would result from the action, if we were victorious, and the little injury if otherwise, determined me to bring on an action as soon as possible. When both parties are agreed in a matter, all obstacles are soon removed. I thought the determination warranted by the soundest principles of good policy, and I hope the event will prove it so, though we were unfortunate. I regret nothing so much as the loss of my artillery, though it was of little use to us, nor can it be, in this great wilderness. However, as the enemy have it, we must also.

"I am happy to hear the Marquis de Lafayette is coming to Virginia; though I am afraid, from a hint in one of Baron Steuben's letters, that he will think himself injured in being superseded in the command. Could the Marquis join us at this moment, we should have a glorious campaign. It would put Lord Cornwallis and his whole army into our hands.

"I am also happy to hear that the Pennsylvania line is coming to the southward. The mutiny in that line was a very extraordinary one. It is reported here to have proceeded from the great cruelty of the officers. A member of Congress writes this; but I believe it to be so far from the truth, that I am persuaded it originated rather through indulgence, than in any other cause."—*MS. Letter, Camp, ten Miles from Guilford Court-House*, March 18th.

shall chearfully be afforded; But if I part with any more Troops, I must accompany them, or have none to command, as there is not at this moment more than a garrison for West Point, nor can I tell when there will be.

I am much pleased to find by your letter, that the State of Virginia exerts itself to your satisfaction. My public and private letters strongly inculcate the necessity of this; and I have again urged Congress to use every possible mean in their power to facilitate the march of the Pensylvania line; as also to recruit, equip, and forward Moylan's Dragoons to you with despatch.

I should be very sorry on any occasion to hurt the feelings of the Baron de Steuben, whom I esteem as a very valuable officer. But in the instance you have mentioned, there is no cause of complaint; for, if he will advert to his own letters to me, he will find that there was a great probability of his having marched with a detachment to reinforce you. Besides which there was a necessity for sending a Genl. officer with the detachment from hence, and political considerations, as it was to be a combined operation (depending upon critical circumstances) with a French land and sea force, pointed to the Marquis. Add to this I know that the French Troops were to be commanded by an officer of senior rank to either the Baron or Marquis. These are the facts, the knowledge of which must, I am persuaded, satisfy the Baron.

I am truly sensible of the merit and fortitude of

the veteran bands under your Command, and wish ye sentiments I entertain of their worth could be communicated with the warmth I feel them. It was my full intention to have requested you to thank Morgan and the gallant Troops under his commd. for their brilliant victory; but the hurry, in which my letters are too often written, occasioned the omission at the time I acknowledged the official account of that action.

Your conjecture respecting the cause of the P.—M—y[1] has more substantial ground for its support, than the letter of the m. of C.; and I am mistaken if the licentious conduct of that line was not more the effect of an overcharge of spirits, on the 1st of January, than of premeditated design.

I have the pleasure to tell you, that, as far as I am acquainted with the opinion of Congress with respect to your conduct, it is much in your favor. That this is the sentiment of all the Southern delegates I have great reason to believe, because I have it declared to me in explicit terms by some of them. Since writing the above I have recd. a letter from Mr. Custis, dated the 29th ulto., in which are these words. "Genl. Greene has by his conduct gained universal esteem, and possesses in the fullest degree the confidence of all ranks of people." He had then just returned from the Assembly at Richmond. I hope the disorder, of which you complained, in your letter of the 18th was no other than the effect of over fatigue, and that you are now perfectly well. That success equal

[1] Mutiny of the Pennsylvania line.

to your merits and wishes may attend you, is the ardent desire of, dear Sir, &c.

P. S. Mrs. Washington and the rest of the family present their best wishes to you, and I have the pleasure to tell you that Mrs. Greene and your children were well lately. Your letters to her under cover to me are regularly forwarded by the Post.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 21 April, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Though the situation of southern affairs would not permit me to recall your corps to this army, yet it was with great reluctance I could resolve upon seeing you separated from head-quarters. My friendship for you makes me desirous of having you near me, and there will occur frequent occasions in coöperative measures in which it would be of the greatest utility I should have it in my power to consult you. These motives would have induced me to propose to you to return personally to head-quarters, had I not believed you would not have chosen to quit your corps, and had I not foreseen a difficulty in giving you a command in the remaining troops. A select corps you could not have, and there are so many major-generals, who conceive themselves in a manner wedded to the different lines, and who are to be provided for, that it would not be easy at present to accommodate matters to your having a command in the line. But this difficulty might be overcome, and I cannot forbear,

late as it is, leaving it at your option to proceed with your corps or return personally to head-quarters. If the last should be your choice, you will give orders to the officer you leave in command to march with all the necessary precaution, and take the orders of the Baron de Steuben. You will at the same time write to the Baron, communicating to him your instructions, and to General Greene, informing him of your return.

If you resolve to proceed forward, I shall have one consolation, which is, that from the present aspect of things it is perhaps most probable the weight of the war this campaign will be in the southern States, and it will become my duty to go there in person, where I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again. Of this I would not have you to say any thing. * * *

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 22 April, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS:

Since writing the enclosed your several letters (acknowledged in my public one of this date) are come to hand—all of them except that of the 12th arrived at Hd.-Quarters within the course of one hour. The reasons assigned in some of your letters, and others which have occurred to me, chiefly of a political nature, assure me that great advantages will be derived from your being wherever the French army and the American head-Quarters are. I therefore not only repeat the offer contained in the enclosed letter, but accompany it with a wish, that you may return,

if you can consistently with your own inclination relinquish your present command for the prospects I have mentioned; not else, as it always has been and ever will be my wish to make things as agreeable to you as the nature of the service will admit. To recall the detachment I cannot, for reasons which in my judgment are conclusive. The accidents to which letters are liable forbid me, unless I could write to you in cipher, to go into a full explanation of some matters, wch. you seem not to be well informed, and wch. I wish to set you write in; but I dare not attempt it in a common letter, nor will there be any necessity for it if you return.

I am very sorry, that any letter of mine should be the subject of public discussion, or give the smallest uneasiness to any person living.[1] The letter, to which I presume you allude, was a confidential one from me to Mr. Lund Washington, (with whom I have lived in perfect intimacy for near 20 Years.) I can neither avow the letter, as it is published by Mr. Rivington, nor declare that it is spurious, because my letter to this gentn. was wrote in great haste, and no copy of it taken. All I remember of the matter is, that, at the time of writing it, I was a good deal chagrined to find by your letter of the 15th of March, (from York

[1] *Lafayette to Washington:* "A letter from you, relating to the delays of the French, makes a great noise at Philadelphia. Indeed, it gives me pain on many political accounts. There are many confidential communications, which you once requested from me, and which my peculiar situation with both sides of the alliance would enable me to make; but having been ordered from you, and many things I had to say not being of a nature, which would render it prudent to commit them to paper, these personal services must be out of the question so long as the war continues in Carolina."—*Susquehanna Ferry*, April 15th.

Town in Virginia,) that the French fleet had not at that time appeared within the Capes of the Chesapeake ; and I meant (in strict confidence) to express my apprehensions and concern for the delay. But as we know that the alteration of a single word does oftentimes divert the sense, or give force to expression, unintended by the letter-writer, I should not be surprised at Mr. Rivington, or the Inspector of his Gazette, having taken this liberty with the letter in question ; especially as he or they have, I am told, lately published a letter from me to Govr. Hancock and his answer, which never had an existence but in the Gazette. That the enemy fabricated a number of Letters for me formerly is a fact well known ; that they are not less capable of doing it now, few will deny. As to his asserting, that this is a genuine copy of the original, he well knows that their friends do not want to convict him of a falsehood, and that ours have not the opportunity of doing it, though both sides are knowing to his talents for lying.[1]

The event, which you seem to speak of with regret, my friendship for you would most assuredly have induced me to impart to you in the moment it happened, had it not been for the request of H——, who desired that no mention might be made of it. Why this injunction on me, while he was communicating

[1] A mail had been intercepted and carried into New York, in which was a private letter, dated March 28th, from General Washington to Lund Washington at Mount Vernon. That letter was printed in Rivington's *Gazette*, 4 April, 1781. The paragraph complained of was substantially that contained in the letter to *William Fitzhugh*, 25 March, 1781, *ante*, and occurs in a number of Washington's letters to his friends.

it himself, is a little extraordinary. But I complied, and religiously fulfilled it.[1] With every sentiment of affectionate regard, I am, &c.

This letter wch. you say has made much noise, I enclose you lest you may not have had it from any other Quarter.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
22 April, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I have received your several letters of the 11th, 12th, two of the 13th, and two of the 15th. I am extremely concerned at the temper of your detachment, and the desertions that are taking place. I imagine however that these would have been nearly as great in any other corps that might have been sent, and, after the Pennsylvania line, I think it would be ineligible to detach any other State line. We find by experience, that they are not only dissipated on the march, but, being at a great distance from their States, are almost entirely neglected. Few recruits are raised for them, and these few are lost on the way. We see how totally the Maryland line has de-

[1] Alluding to a personal difference that had occurrred between Washington and his aide-de-camp Colonel Hamilton. The particulars may be seen in the *Works of Alexander Hamilton* (Lodge's edition), viii., 35.

From Lafayette's Letter: "Considering the footing I am upon with your Excellency, it would perhaps appear to you strange, that I never mentioned a circumstance, which lately happened in your family. I was the first who knew of it, and from that moment exerted every means in my power to prevent a separation, which I knew was not agreeable to your Excellency. To this measure I was prompted by affection for you; but I thought it was improper to mention any thing about it, until you were pleased to impart it to me."—April 15th.

clined, and how little is doing to reëstablish it; a line formerly among the most numerous and respectable in the army. Our plan at present appears to me to be to commit the defence of the southern States to the States as far as Pennsylvania inclusive, and to make up any additional succors, that may be necessary by detachment. We must endeavor to compensate these detachments for the loss of State supplies by giving them a larger proportion of Continental. On this principle I am sending you articles mentioned in the enclosed list; twelve hundred shirts, twelve hundred linen overalls, twelve hundred pairs of shoes, twelve hundred pairs of socks, and one hundred hunting-shirts, which set out two days ago from this place. I have also urged the Board of War to do their best for you. * * *

It appears to me extraordinary, that your advices should have given you an idea so different from the whole complexion of the intelligence I had received, concerning the probability of a certain event.[1] This, and the situation of our own force, have induced me to regard it as barely possible; too precarious to enter far into our dispositions; possible only in a case, which we are not authorized to expect will happen.[2] I dare not trust the details on which this opinion is founded to paper.

[1] An attack upon New York. Colonel Laurens wrote from Paris, on the 11th of April, that "the ministry did not seem to approve of the siege of New York as an operation for the ensuing campaign." The letter containing this intelligence could not have been received by Washington at the date of the above to Lafayette.

[2] The coming of the second French division.

The danger to the southern States is immediate and pressing. It is our duty to give them support. The detachment with you, all circumstances considered, was the most proper for the purpose. The project General Greene has lately adopted, adds a particular motive to continuing its destination. It is essential to him, that Phillips should be held in check ; and we cannot wholly rely on militia for this. As to a transportation by water, while the enemy commands the Chesapeake and Cape Fear, I do not see how it is practicable. The only cause of hesitation in my mind, about sending your corps to the southward, was a separation from you. I refer you to private letters accompanying this, one written previous to the receipt of your last, the other subsequently. As to our force here, you know what it was when you left us, and you will know what it is now, when I tell you that we have as yet received but few recruits. The enemy's present force of regular troops at New York is near seven thousand. I shall recommend Major Macpherson, as you request, to General Greene. Present my warmest thanks to that officer and assure him of the sense I have of his services. * * *

I am, my dear Marquis, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

DEAR SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 27 April, 1781.

Your letter of this date has not a little embarrassed me.[1] You must remember the ferment in the Penn-

[1] Having received a commission in the army of the United States, in conse-

sylvania line the last campaign, occasioned by the appointment of Major Macpherson, and you know the uneasiness which at this moment exists among the eastern troops on account of the commands conferred upon Colonel Gimat and Major Galvan, although it was the result of absolute necessity.

Should circumstances admit of the formation of another advanced corps, of which I see very little prospect from present appearances, it can be but small, and must be composed almost entirely of eastern troops; and to add to the discontents of the officers of those lines by the further appointment of an officer of your rank to ye command of it, or in it, would, I am certain, involve me in a difficulty of a very disagreeable and delicate nature, and might perhaps lead to consequences more serious than it is easy to imagine. While I adhere firmly to the right of making such appointments as you request, I am at the same time obliged to reflect, that it will not do to push that right too far, more especially in a service like ours, and at a time so critical as the present.

I am convinced, that no officer can with justice dispute your merit and abilities. The opposition heretofore made has not been for the want of those qualifications in the gentlemen, who are and have been the objects of discontent. The officers of the line contend, without having reference to particular persons, that it is a hardship and reflection upon them to introduce brevet officers into commands, (of some

quence of a resolution of Congress for granting commissions to aides-de-camp, Colonel Hamilton applied for actual employment in a light corps. He was not now an aide-de-camp.

permanency), in which there are more opportunities of distinguishing themselves, than in the line of the army at large, and with the men they have had the trouble to discipline and prepare for the field.

My principal concern arises from an apprehension, that you will impute my refusal of your request to other motives, than those I have expressed; but I beg you to be assured I am only influenced by the reasons which I have mentioned. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
30 April, 1781.

SIR,

I assure your Excellency, that I feel extreme pain at the occasion of that part of your letter of the 26th instant, which relates to an intercepted letter of mine published by the enemy.[1] I am unhappy that an ac-

[1] After quoting the extract from the letter to Lund Washington, Count de Rochambeau said:

"If this was really written by your Excellency, I shall beg leave to observe, that the result of this reflection would seem to be, that we have had here the choice of two expeditions proposed, and that we have preferred the less to a more considerable undertaking, which your Excellency desired. If such is the meaning, I beg your Excellency to call to mind, that the line-of-battle ship and the two frigates went out of Newport on the 9th of February, on a demand made by Congress and the State of Virginia to the Chevalier Destouches; that your letter, with the plan for the going out of the whole fleet with a detachment of one thousand Frenchmen to act conjointly with the Marquis de Lafayette, bears date the 15th: that I did not receive it till the 19th; that, having given an instant communication of it to M. Destouches, I had the honor on the 20th to send his answer to your Excellency; and that, no later than the day after the gale of wind, which weakened the British fleet towards the end of January, by the loss of the Culloden, I offered all the land forces that could possibly be transported by the navy, and have not ceased to do it since. I shall not men-

cident should have put it in their power to give to the world any thing from me, which may contain an implication the least disagreeable to you, or to the Chevalier Destouches. I assure you sincerely, that I have no copy of the original letter in my possession, so that I am unable by a comparison to determine how far the publication may be just. The enemy have fabricated whole letters for me, and even a series of letters; and it is not improbable they may have given a different turn to some of my expressions in the present instance. It would however be disingenous in me not to acknowledge, that I believe the general import to be true. The copy, however, which your Excellency has sent to me, differs in some respects from that which the enemy has published, as you will perceive by the enclosed Gazette. Whatever con-

tion to you the reasons, that delayed the departure of M. Destouches's squadron, because they do not come under my cognizance. I only state these facts to call to your mind these dates, which I beg you to verify by your correspondence, that you may be entirely persuaded, that there will never be the least delay in what concerns the troops whom I command, in the execution of your orders, as soon as I shall receive them."—*MS. Letter*, April 26th.

The following is an extract from the instructions sent by the Minister of War to Count de Rochambeau, dated Versailles, March 7th.

"1. It is the intention of his Majesty, that you do not abandon Rhode Island, if the squadron destined to act in concert with you for its defence cannot retire to Boston without hazard, or before it shall be relieved from its defensive position at Rhode Island by a superior naval force.

"2. I will inform you, that, in the month of July or August, the superior naval force of which you have just received notice, will withdraw the squadron of M. de Barras from the harbour of Rhode Island; and you will carefully reserve to yourself the knowledge of this arrangement, which may be accelerated.

"3. If, by unforeseen events, or any cause whatever, the army of Washington should be broken up and dispersed, it is the intention of the King, that, under these circumstances, you should decline acceding to any orders or requests of that general to penetrate into the interior of the continent; as in that case it

struction it may bear, I beg your Excellency will consider the letter to a private friend, a gentleman who has the direction of my concerns at home, totally unconnected with public affairs, and on whose discretion I could absolutely rely. No idea of the same kind has ever gone to any public body.

When I say, that I believe the general import of the publication to be true, I mean it in this sense, that there did appear to me a degree of delay in executing the enterprise suggested by me, with the causes of which I was not well apprized, and an idea of this kind was probably expressed in my letter to Mr. Washington. As to the apparent insinuation, that the first expedition had been preferred to the one proposed by me, I could not have intended to

would be prudent to reserve yourself, and to retire to the Antilles if possible, or to St. Domingo, according to the season.

"4. If, on the contrary, the American army remains in its present state, and yet without being able to undertake any combined operation with the squadron; and if this latter should attempt any other enterprise, where the concurrence of a certain number of land forces would be required, the King leaves it in your power to furnish them, provided that the plan be concerted with the American general.

"5. Should there be an opportunity for the squadron at Rhode Island to act independently of the American army, you are aware that the naval forces of the King should concur in all operations, which are considered advantageous to the common cause.

"6. You are also aware, that, as long as the King's troops occupy Rhode Island, the transports destined to receive the troops are to be kept there; when, on the contrary, the army under your command shall penetrate into the country, and the squadron abandons Rhode Island, this squadron will proceed to Boston, and take with it the transports, that have been retained.

"7. If, from the different causes mentioned, you should remain in your position at Rhode Island, and a superior naval force of the King should withdraw the squadron which is in that port, I give you notice, that the Count de Grasse has orders to leave with you two vessels to defend the port, and the transports necessary for your army."

convey it, in its fullest latitude, because it would have been unjust. I could not but have recollected, that my formal proposal did not reach you till after the departure of the first squadron, though the suggestion of it was previous. My letter however was written in haste, and might have been inaccurately expressed. I have lately learnt, (though not officially,) that the cause of the delay I have alluded to was a want of supplies for the fleet. Impressed with a real esteem for and confidence in the Chevalier Destouches, I heard this circumstance with satisfaction.

With this explanation, I leave the matter to his candor and to yours, and flatter myself it will make no impressions inconsistent with an entire persuasion of my sincere esteem and attachment. I have the honor to be, with perfect respect, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR BENJAMIN TALLMADGE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
30 April, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Your two favors of the 24th and 25th have been duly received.

Fully impressed with the idea of the utility of early, regular, and accurate communication of the kind in contemplation, I shall make no difficulty in acceding to the proposal contained in your private

[1] In M. de Rochambeau's reply to the above, he expressed himself entirely satisfied. See a further explanation in the note appended to the letter to General Schuyler, March 23d; and in the letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, April 22d.

letter from Newport. But at the same time that I am engaging in behalf of the United States a liberal reward for the services of the C——s,[1] of whose fidelity and ability I entertain a high opinion, it is certainly but reasonable, from patriotism and every other principle, that their exertions should be proportionably great, to subserve essentially the interest of the *public*. All the interior and minute arrangements of the correspondence I request you will settle with them as expeditiously and advantageously as may be, and especially that you will urge, in very forcible terms, the necessity of having the communications as circumstantial, frequent, and expeditious as possible.

The great objects of information you are very well acquainted with; such as arrivals, embarkations, preparations for movements, alterations of positions, situations of posts, fortifications, garrisons, strength or weakness of each, distribution and strength of corps, and, in general, every thing which can be interesting and important for us to know.

Besides these, you are also sensible that there are many things upon a smaller scale, which are necessary to be reported, and that whatever intelligence is communicated ought to be, not in general terms, but in detail, and with the greatest precision. At present I am anxious to know (for the reports have been very numerous, vague, and uncertain), whether another embarkation is preparing, and, if so, to what amount, and where destined; what the present force of the enemy is, particularly on Long Island, in New York,

[1] Culper, Sr., and Culper, Jr.

and at Kingsbridge; what corps are at the latter place, how strong, and where posted exactly; and, indeed, what the situation, prospects, and designs of the enemy are, so far as they can be penetrated into. I am, &c.

TO LUND WASHINGTON, AT MOUNT VERNON.

NEW WINDSOR, 30 April, 1781.[1]

DEAR LUND,

Your letter of the 18th come to me by the last Post.

I am very sorry to hear of your loss. I am a little sorry to hear of my own; but that which gives me most concern is, that you should go on board the enemy's vessels, and furnish them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard, that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my House and laid the Plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of re-

[1] General Washington commenced a *Diary* on the 1st of May, to which he prefixed the following remarks.

"To have a clearer understanding of the entries, which may follow, it would be proper to recite in detail our wants and our prospects; but this alone would be a work of much time and great magnitude. It may suffice to give the sum of them, which I shall do in a few words. Instead of having magazines filled with provisions, we have a scanty pittance scattered here and there in the different States; instead of having our arsenals well supplied with military stores, they are poorly provided and the workmen all leaving them; instead of having the various articles of field-equipage in readiness to be delivered, the quarter-master-general, as the dernier resort, according to his account, is but now applying to the several States to provide these things for their troops respectively; instead of having a regular system of transportation established upon credit, or

freshments to them with a view to prevent a conflagration.

It was not in your power, I acknowledge, to prevent them from sending a flag on shore, and you did right to meet it; but you should, in the same instant that the business of it was unfolded, have declared explicitly, that it was improper for you to yield to the request; after which, if they had proceeded to help themselves by force, you could but have submitted; (and, being unprovided for defence,) this was to be preferred to a feeble opposition, which only serves as a pretext to burn and destroy.

I am thoroughly persuaded, that you acted from your best judgment, and believe, that your desire to preserve my property, and rescue the buildings from impending danger, were your governing motives, but to go on board their vessels, carry them refreshments, commune with a parcel of plundering scoundrels, and request a favor by asking a surrender of my negroes, was exceedingly ill judged, and, 't is to be feared, will be unhappy in its consequences, as it will be a prece-

funds in the quartermaster's hands to defray the contingent expenses of it, we have neither the one nor the other, and all that business, or a great part of it, being done by military impress, we are daily and hourly oppressing the people, souring their tempers, and alienating their affections; instead of having the regiments completed to the new establishment, which ought to have been done agreeably to the requisitions of Congress, scarce any State in the Union has at this hour an eighth part of its quota in the field, and little prospect that I can see of ever getting more than half; in a word, instead of having every thing in readiness to take the field, we have nothing; and, instead of having the prospect of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have a bewildered and gloomy defensive one, unless we should receive a powerful aid of ships, land troops, and money from our generous allies, and these at present are too contingent to build upon."

dent for others, and may become a subject of animadversion.

I have no doubt of the enemy's intention to prosecute the plundering plan they have begun ; and unless a stop can be put to it, by the arrival of a superior naval force, I have as little doubt of its ending in the loss of all my negroes, and in the destruction of my Houses ; but I am prepared for the event ; under the prospect of which, if you could deposit in safety at some convenient distance from the water, the most valuable and least bulky articles, it might be consistent with policy and prudence, and a mean of preserving them hereafter. Such and so many things as are necessary for common and present use must be retained, and run their chance through the fiery trial of this summer. I am sincerely yours.

Mrs. Washington joins me in best and affectionate regard for you, Mrs. Washington and Milly Posey. I do not know what negroes they may have left you, and as I have observed before I do not know what number they will have left me by the time they have done—but this much I am sure of, that you shall never want assistance when it is in my power to afford it. I am, &c.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

NEW WINDSOR, 4 May, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

The freedom of your communications is an evidence to me of the sincerity of your attachment ; and every fresh instance of this gives pleasure and adds

strength to the bond, which unites us in friendship. In this light I view the intimation contained in your letter of the 23d ulto., from Alexandria, respecting the conduct of Mr. Lund Washington. Some days previous to the receipt of your letter, which only came to my hands yesterday, I received an acct. of this transaction from the Gentleman himself, and immediately wrote and forwarded the answer, of which the enclosed is a copy. This letter, which was written in the moment of my obtaining the first intimation of the matter, may be considered as a testimony of my disapprobation of his conduct, and the transmission of it to you, as a proof of my friendship ; because I wish you to be assured, that no man can condemn the measure more sincerely than I do.

A false idea, arising from the consideration of his being my Steward, and in that character more the trustee and guardian of my property than the representative of my honor, has misled his judgment and plunged him into error, (upon the appearance of desertion of my negroes, and danger to my buildings ;) for sure I am, that no man is more firmly opposed to the enemy than he. From a thorough conviction of this, and of his integrity, I entrusted every species of my property to his care, without reservation or fear of his abusing it. The last paragraph of my letter to him was occasioned by an expression of his fear, that all the Estates convenient to the river would be stripped of their negroes and movable property.

I am very happy to find, that desertions had ceased, and content had taken place, in the detachment you

commanded.[1] Before this letter can have reached you, you must have taken your ultimate resolution upon the proposal contained in my letters of the 21st and 22d of last month, and have made the consequent arrangements. I shall be silent, therefore, on the subject of them; and only beg, in case you should not return to this army, and the papers were not lost with your other baggage (on which event give me leave to express my concern), that you would permit Mr. Capitaine to furnish me with copies of the drafts, and remarks of the Pilots (taken at Colonel Dey's) on the entrance of the harbor of New York. It is possible they may be wanted; and I am not able to furnish them without your assistance.

Mrs. Washington, and the rest of my (small) family, which at present consists only of Tilghman and Humphreys, join me in cordial salutations; and, with sentiments of the purest esteem and most affectionate regard, I remain, my dear Marquis, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
8 May, 1781

SIR:

I have been honored with your Excellency's favors of the 26th and 29th ultimo., with the inclosures to which you refer—They shall be duly attended to.

Under cover of the letter of the 26th is one from General Gates to Congress, indorsed by the

[1] Lafayette obtained some clothing for his troops by pledging his own credit.

Secretary " Ordered to be transmitted to the Commander in Chief," without any particular directions respecting the subject of it. Congress have been informed of the instructions which have been given to General Greene relative to bringing on the enquiry upon General Gates as early as circumstances would admit, and they have been advised that it was deemed impracticable at the time to hold a Court at the Southern Army, for the reasons given to General Greene by the Board of General and Field Officers consulted upon the occasion. General Gates has also been furnished with these Reasons. There remain but two methods of determining the matter speedily, in a military way—directing General Greene to order a Court of Enquiry immediately, and at all events; or taking depositions at the Southward, and bringing them before a Court in this Army.

I am sorry that I am obliged so often to wound the feelings of Congress with Accounts of our distressed situation on the score of provisions, but duty calls upon me to represent what it is not in my power, by my utmost exertions, to prevent.[1]

Your Excellency will perceive, by copies of letters from General Heath of the 6th instant and from

[1] "I have been obliged, from the distress to which we were reduced for want of provision, to apply 9,000 dollars of the new emission, of the money sent by the State of Massachusetts for the payment of her Troops, to the use of the Quarter Master's department, to enable him to bring forward Flour from Jersey and salt meat from Connecticut. Before I would consent to this expedient, I was driven to the necessity of consuming every ounce of provision which had been kept as a reserve in the Garrison of West point, and I had strained impress by military force to that length, that I trembled for the consequence of the execution of every Warrant which I granted for the purpose—so much are the

Briga. Genl. Clinton of the 30th of April and 4th instant, to what an alarming situation we are reduced at these posts and upon the Northern Frontier. Upon the receipt of Genl. Clinton's letter of the 30th ulto. I, upon the 5th, sent off 34 Barrels of Beef, which was every ounce in the Magazine and 50 Barrels of Flour to Albany. I am now, upon receiving the letter of the 4th sending off 100 out of 131 barrels in the Magazine. Of meat I have not a Barrel to send. The Quarter Master is unable to transport what is at the distant Magazines, and the States neither do that, or send on Beef, Cattle agreeable to requisition.

I have written most pressingly to the President of Pennsylvania for a supply of Flour, and that nothing may be left unessayed on my part, I am going to send Major General Heath to the Eastern States purposely to represent our distresses for Meat in their true colors, and to point out to them the inevitable consequences of a failure in the non-compliance with the requisitions upon them. Whether this will have any better effect than my frequent applications by letter, I cannot say ; but of this I am certain, that if there is not a very great and sudden change of measures it will be next to impossible to keep the Army together.

people irritated by the frequent calls which have been made upon them in that way. If it be possible to furnish the Quarter Master with but a little money to enable him to pay part for transportation, I most earnestly request it may be done, as I am confident the measures we have hitherto been pursuing, cannot be much longer made use of without imminent danger of bringing the people to an open resistance."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 1 May, 1781.

To add to our present embarrassments, application has just been made to me by Colonel Menonville, who is sent forward by Count Rochambeau, to know in what manner it will be most convenient to us to make payment for a very large quantity of provisions, with which, Doctor Franklin, in behalf of the United States, has contracted to supply the French Army. Colonel Menonville's instructions have reference to Resolves of Congress and letters which have passed between your Excellency and Count Rochambeau on the subject, but as I am totally a stranger to the whole transaction, I have been under the necessity of referring him to Congress, and have taken the liberty to give him letters of introduction to your Excellency.

As Colonel Menonville was very pressing with me to know whether I could give him any assurances of the provision being furnished, and at what places it would be most proper to deposit it, I could only tell him, that none of what had been required of the States for the subsistence of the Army could possibly be spared, because, the requisitions were they fully complied with, would not be more than adequate to our own wants. I gave him my opinion as to the proper places of deposit, in as particular a manner as the uncertainty of our plan of operations would admit.

Colo. Menonville is likewise charged by the Count Rochambeau, to solicit some heavy Iron Cannon for the works at Newport, in place of the Brass Battering Cannon which are at present in them, and which there will be a necessity of removing should the Army

remove. When I told him that I knew of none belonging to the Continent but what were in use, he informed me he understood that there were some in New Hampshire which had been imported for the 74 Gun ship now upon the stocks. Upon this, I promised him to mention the matter to Congress, and to recommend a compliance with his request, if the Cannon should be there and can be spared without inconvenience. I have, &c.[1]

TO JOHN SULLIVAN, IN CONGRESS.

NEW WINDSOR, 11 May, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Not having seen or heard of any resolve in Congress for establishing the principles of promotion in the army, I am apprehensive that the report of the committee, who had this matter under consideration, is now sleeping in Congress. This, and a recent instance in the Pensylvania Regiment of artillery in proof of the *absolute* necessity of adopting some mode, by which the whole army may be bd., and a stop thereby be put to those disputes, which keep it in a continual state of distraction and discontent, are the reasons for my troubling you again on this subject, and praying that some decision may be come to by Congress. It is much easier to avoid disagreements than to remove disconts.; and I again declare, that if my differing in sentiment from the opins. of

[1] Read in Congress, May 14th. Referred to Sullivan, Varnum and Montgomery. On the 15th referred to Bland, Carroll, and Witherspoon.

the Comee. in some points has been the occasion of delay, I would, rather than have the matter lie over a moment, yield a free assent to all their propositions; for any principle is better than none. I also wish, though this is more a matter of private than public consideration, that the business could be taken up on acct. of Mr. Tilghman, whose appt. seems to depd. upon it; for, if there are men in the army deserving the comn. proposed for him, he is one of them.

This gentn. came out a captn. of one of the light Infy. Companies of Phila., and served in the flying Camp in 1776. In August of the same year he joined my family, and has been in every action in which the main army was concerned. He has been a zealous servant and slave to the public, and a faithful assistant to me for near five years, great part of which time he refused to receive pay. Honor and gratitude interest me in his favor, and make me sollicitous to obtain his Commission. His modesty and love of concord placed the date of his expected comn. at the 1st of April, 1777, because he would not take rank of Hamilton and Meade, who were declared aides in orders, (which he did not choose to be) before that period, altho' he had joined my family, and done all the duties of one, from the 1st of Septr. preceding.

My public letters to Congress will have informed you of the situation of this army, and I have no scruple in giving it as my decided opn., that, unless a capital change takes place soon, it will be impossible for me to maintain our Posts, and keep the army from dispersing.

The resolution of Congress to appoint ministers of war, foreign affairs, and finance, gave, as far as I was able to learn the Sentiments of men in and out of ye army, universal satisfaction. Postponing of the 1st, delaying of the 2d, and disagreeing about the 3d have had the direct contrary effect; and I can venture to assure you, not from random guess or vague information, that the want of an able financier, and a proper plan for the disposition of foreign loans will be a greater bar to the obtaining of them than perhaps Congress are aware of. I could say more on this subject, were I at liberty; but I shall only add, that there is not in my opinion a moment to be lost in placing such a character as the world conceives an opinion of at the head of your finance, that he may as soon as possible enter upon the duties of his office. I am, &c.

TO PHILIP SCHUYLER.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
14 May, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

The letter which you did me the favor to write on the 4th instant has been duly received.

I am glad to find, that you have received the necessary papers, and are entering upon the measures for intercepting the enemy's communications. I hope you will be enabled, by the assistance of the person proposed, if he is found sufficiently faithful and intelligent, to prosecute those measures to good effect; because I think the intelligence obtained through

that channel may be depended upon, and will eventually be of very great consequence to us. Much, I apprehend, is to be dreaded from the predatory incursions of the enemy this campaign. To be apprized of their designs, and guarded against them at all points, as far as possible, will tend most essentially to disconcert their plans and protect our frontiers. As to the disposition of the Vermontese, I know nothing of it, but from report. At present they are at least a dead weight upon us. It is greatly to be regretted, that they are not by some means or other added to our scale, as their numbers, strength, and resources would certainly preponderate very considerably, and make the enemy extremely cautious how they advanced far in that quarter. The bulk of the people, I am persuaded, must be well affected. Should it be otherwise with any of the individuals, I ardently wish they may be detected in their villany, and brought to the punishment they deserve.[1]

[1] The separation of Vermont from New York suggested to Germaine an advantage for the British, for he informed General Haldimand that he should give the inhabitants reason to expect the king would erect their country into a separate province (3 March, 1779). A year later Col. Beverly Robinson, trusting to the ill feeling engendered by the supposed neglect of Vermont, asked Ethan Allen to state "without reserve whatever proposals you would wish to make" to Sir Henry Clinton, intimating that he would be rewarded by a separate government under the king and constitution of England (30 March, 1780). Allen received this letter in July, showed it to the Governor of Vermont and a number of the leaders in the State, and, on their advice, returned no answer. In September a correspondence was opened with Haldimand for the exchange of prisoners, an application through Washington having failed, and the British commander not only acceded to negotiate an exchange, but proposed a truce (October 22), and appointed commissioners. Schuyler at once wrote to Washington: "Sending a flag to Vernon for the purpose of exchanging prisoners appears to me only a cover to some design of the enemy, and gives me much uneasiness, especially as rumors prevail that *the person*, whom your excellency

I have been exceeding distressed by the repeated accounts I have received of the sufferings of the troops on the frontier, and the terrible consequences which must ensue, unless they were speedily supplied. What gave a particular poignancy to the sting I felt

was informed to have been in New York in July last negotiating with the enemy, has been in New York, but I cannot learn that any one can positively ascertain either of these facts" (October 31). It was also rumored that *the person* had been in Canada about six weeks before. Washington replied on the 6th of November:

"I confess, all circumstances and previous information considered, that matters in a certain quarter carry a very suspicious face. Should it appear, upon a further investigation, that there are good grounds for present suspicions, you will concert measures with Brigadier-General Clinton (to whom I have written upon the subject, without mentioning names), to seize and secure, with as much secrecy and as suddenly as possible, the person in question with his papers. You know how very delicate a business this is, and I therefore trust to your prudence in the execution of it. Nothing but the most palpable proofs ought to warrant the seizure of his person. But a variety of means may be fallen upon to circumvent and defeat their plans, when you have a regular force to depend upon."

The suspected person was Ethan Allen. Charges were exhibited against him in the General Assembly, and upon investigation his resignation as Brigadier-General was accepted. Schuyler, in writing to Washington on the 12th, announced Allen's "dismissal," and added: "That a certain person is engaged in the enemy's interests I make little doubt of, but I do not think it either prudent or politic that he should be seized at present; a little time will probably furnish us with sufficient testimony for a conviction."

The truce thus granted to Vermont awakened many suspicions of a treasonable connection between the British and some Vermont leaders. The State had applied to Congress for admission into the Confederation, and receiving no reply, an alliance with the other New England States was proposed, because, it was asserted, Vermont was kept out of the Union through the undue influence of the contiguous States, claiming jurisdiction (12 December, 1780). A demand had been made of New York for a relinquishment of its claims, and in February, the New York Senate resolved to appoint commissioners to settle the terms on which New York would accede, but the House were prevented from considering this resolution "by a threat of the governor to prorogue the General Assembly." Schuyler was strongly in favor of an immediate acknowledgment of their independence, that they "might be made useful to the common cause." But Clinton did not wish action, as the affair had been referred to the decision of Congress.

on the occasion was my inability to afford relief. Such partial supplies however as were on hand, to the very last barrel of meat, I ordered instantly to be sent, and have promised General Clinton what further succor the States will enable me to give. Major-Gen-

In December, 1780, Haldimand drew up his instructions for his commissioners, and inserted the offer of Germaine, adding a promise that Allen and Chittenden should be provided with commands. In February, Beverly Robinson again wrote Allen, renewing his proposition, and Allen sent both of Robinson's letters to the Continental Congress. In April Allen was chosen a Brigadier-General by the State, and Haldimand wrote Germaine expressing his suspicions that Allen was endeavoring to deceive both Congress and him (30 April). The suspicions of Schuyler increased, and he wrote to Washington:

"The conduct of the Vermontese is mysterious, and if the reports which generally prevail are well founded, their measures will certainly be attended with dangerous consequences to this and the other United States. I cannot however believe that the bulk of the people are in the secret. I rather conjecture that the person whom we suspected last year to have been in New York, and some others, are the only culpable ones, and that they amuse the people with making them believe that the whole of their negotiation with General Haldimand is merely calculated to give Congress and this State the alarm, that the independence of Vermont may be acknowledged. . . .

"I sincerely wish they [Congress] would speedily decide, acknowledge them independent, and admit them into the union. If this was instantly done, the measures of their leaders would be brought to the test, and we should know if they had only tended to bring about their independence, or to connect themselves with the enemy. But, unless Congress are pushed to a decision, I believe they will do nothing in it; but who is to urge them, I know not. The governor cannot do it officially, and our delegates, I believe, will not, unless they believe that the decision will go against the Vermontese."—*Letter, Saratoga*, May 4th.

On May 1st, Ira Allen, the only representative of Vermont in the negotiations for a cartel, set out for Isle aux Noix to meet the British commissioners, and his conference extended from the 8th till the 25th. The cartel was completed and an attempt made to determine the conditions under which Vermont would join the British, but this came to naught. Washington wrote to Brigadier-General James Clinton on July 9th: "I can give no countenance to any cartel which may have been settled between the people of Vermont, and the governor of Canada, and so I lately informed Mr. Chittenden. . . . I wish there may not be other business transacted under the cover of a flag from Vermont to Canada besides the exchange of prisoners."

eral Heath hath gone to the several eastern States, to enforce my pointed representations, rouse them to more vigorous exertions, and to make arrangements for supplies during the whole campaign. I cannot but hope this measure will be attended with success. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
17 May, 1781.

SIR,

His Excellency the Count de Rochambeau having received despatches from the court of France by his son, the Viscount de Rochambeau, who arrived at Boston in the frigate la Concorde, the 6th instant, has requested an interview with me. I have appointed the place of meeting at Weathersfield, on Monday next, for which purpose I shall set out tomorrow from hence. I am in hopes, we shall be able, from the intelligence received, to settle a definitive plan of campaign.

I am sorry to inform your Excellency, that a part of our advanced troops were surprised on Monday morning near Croton River, by about sixty horse and two hundred foot under the command of Colonel Delancey. Colonel Greene, who commanded our party, was mortally wounded in his quarters. The enemy attempted to carry him off, but he died upon the road. Major Flagg was killed. The loss of these officers is to be regretted, especially the former, who had upon several occasions distinguished himself,

particularly in the defence of the post at Red Bank, in 1777, when he defeated Count Donop. I enclose a return of our loss upon the late occasion.

The enemy on their return fell in with Captain Fog of the New Hampshire line, who was patrolling near the White Plains. They attempted to surround him, and cut him off by dint of superior numbers; but the captain made so good a disposition of his small force, that he brought them off with the loss of two men only. The enemy had a captain and several men killed in the attack. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

SUBSTANCE OF A CONFERENCE BETWEEN GENERAL WASHINGTON AND COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU AT WEATHERSFIELD, 22 MAY, 1781.[2]

ROCHAMBEAU.—Concerning a project of employing the squadron at Newport to transport the French army to the Chesapeake Bay, he consulted Count de Barras, who deemed it impractica-

[1] Read in Congress, April 21st.

[2] Generals Knox and Duportail had accompanied the Commander-in-chief to Weathersfield. The following is an extract from Washington's *Diary*.

"*May* 18*th*. Set out this day for the interview at Weathersfield with the Count de Rochambeau and Admiral Barras. Reached Morgan's Tavern, forty-three miles from Fishkill Landing, after dining at Colonel Vandebergh's.

"19*th*. Breakfasted at Litchfield; dined at Farmington; and lodged at Weathersfield, at the house of Mr. Joseph Webb.

"20*th*. Had a good deal of private conversation with Governor Trumbull, who gave it to me as his opinion, that, if any important offensive operation should be undertaken, he had little doubt of our obtaining men and provision adequate to our wants. In this opinion Colonel Wadsworth and others concurred.

"21*st*. Count de Rochambeau, with the Chevalier de Chastellux, arrived about noon. The appearance of the British fleet, under Admiral Arbuthnot, off Block Island, prevented the attendance of the Count de Barras.

"22*d*. Fixed with Count de Rochambeau the plan of campaign.

"23*d*. Count de Rochambeau set out on his return to Newport, while I pre-

ble, chiefly on account of the inferiority of the naval force to that of the enemy. The objections were mentioned in detail.[1]

1st. WASHINGTON.—"However desirable such an event might have been, the reasons assigned by Count de Barras are sufficient to prove its impracticability."

ROCHAMBEAU.—Should the French army march to the North River, will the squadron be safe at Newport under a guard of militia? By secret instructions he is not permitted to separate his army, except for detachments of a short duration. Count de Barras thinks the squadron would not be secure, if the enemy should take possession of Rhode Island; and, moreover, he has been instructed, that, in case the army should march into the country, his fleet should proceed to Boston.

2d. WASHINGTON.—"It is Genl. Washington's opinion, that the plan of Campaign will render it necessary for the French army to March from Newport towards the North River as soon as possible, and that consequently it will be advisable for the Count de Barras (agreeable to his instructions in that case provided) to seek the first favorable moment of removing the squadron under his command to Boston."

ROCHAMBEAU.—In that case what does General Washington propose about Rhode Island? Does he intend it should be kept by a general officer and a body of American militia? It is to be observed, that if in the hurricane months the French fleet should

pared and forwarded despatches to the governors of the four New England States, calling on them in earnest and pointed terms to complete their Continental battalions for the campaign at least, if it could not be done for the war or three years; to hold a body of militia, according to the proportion given to them, ready to march in one week after being called for; and to adopt some effectual mode to supply the troops when assembled with provisions and the means of transportation. I also solicited the governors of Massachusetts and Connecticut earnestly for a loan of powder.

"*24th.* Set out on my return to New Windsor. Dined at Farmington and lodged at Litchfield.

"*25th.* Breakfasted at Coggswell's; dined at Colonel Vandeberg's; and arrived at head-quarters about sunset."

[1] The substance only of Count de Rochambeau's propositions and queries is here stated. The replies and remarks of Washington are printed in full, as transcribed from the records.

come to the coast, the harbor of Rhode Island might be of use to the operations of the squadrons, either for a union to act against New York, or as a place of retreat in case of misfortune.

3d. WASHINGTON.—"As the harbor of Rhode Island may be useful to the fleets of his Most Christian Majesty, it is Genl. Washington's opinion, that a force should be left for the security of Newport; but, as the Enemy will not be in a condition, from the present circumstances of their affairs, to detach any considerable body of men to re-possess the Island, it is agreed between His Excellency Count de Rochambeau and Genl. Washington, that 500 Militia under a good officer will be sufficient for the Guards for the works; but, in case of an enterprise against them, a greater force should be called for their defence."

ROCHAMBEAU.—If General Washington resolves that Rhode Island shall be left, and the works destroyed, does he consider the siege artillery, powder, magazines, and heavy stores, which cannot follow the French army in a land march, as safe at Providence under the two hundred French troops and the militia? For such an object the English may attempt an enterprise to seize these stores. Would they not be more secure, if taken with the fleet to Boston?

4th. WASHINGTON.—"In the former communications between His Excellency Count de Rochambeau and Genl. Washington, it was understood, that the French Fleet was to have remained in the harbor of Newport after the removal of the army; and therefore Providence was fixed upon as a safe and proper deposit of the heavy artillery and spare stores.—It now being determined, that the fleet shall embrace the first opportunity of going round to the Harbor of Boston, it is to be wished, that the heavy artillery and spare Stores should be sent round also. But Genl. Washington being informed by His Excellency Count de Rochambeau, that they have been already deposited at Providence, and that it will be impossible, under the present circumstances of the Fleet, and want of Transportation, to remove them to Boston, he is of opinion, that they may safely remain there under the guard of 200 French Troops, who will be aided by the Militia of the Country in case of need. The possession of Newport will add to their security."

ROCHAMBEAU.—Should the squadron from the West Indies arrive in these seas, an event that will probably be announced by a frigate beforehand, what operations will General Washington have in view, after a union of the French army with his own?

5th. WASHINGTON.—"The Enemy, by several detachments from New York, having reduced their force at that Post to less than one half of the number, which they had at the time of the former conference at Hartford in September last, it is thought advisable to form a junction of the French and American Armies upon the North River, as soon as possible, and move down to the vicinity of New York, to be ready to take advantage of any opportunity, which the weakness of the enemy may afford. Should the West Indies Fleet arrive upon the Coast, the force thus combined may either proceed in the operation against New Yk., or may be directed against the enemy in some other quarter, as circumstances shall dictate. The great waste of men, (which we have found from experience) in long marches to the Southern States, the advanced season now to commence these in, and the difficulties and expense of Land transportation thither, with other considerations too well known to His Excellency Count de Rochambeau to need detailing, point out the preference, which an operation against New York seems to have in present circumstances over an attempt to send a force to the southward."

Answer to the P. S.:

"The observation upon the 4th head sufficiently answers this, as the numerals 500 militia proposed to be stationed at Newport may be disposed of in any manner which His Excellency Count de Rochambeau may think proper." Weathersfield, 23d May, 1781.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

WEATHERSFIELD, 23 May, 1781.

SIR,

The letter, which I have the honor to enclose from the Count de Rochambeau, will, I imagine, inform you of the intended march of the French army tow-

ards the North River, and of the destination of the King's squadron now in the harbor of Newport, (if circumstances will admit of the respective movements.) I should be wanting in respect and confidence, were I not to add that our object is New York. The season, the difficulty and expense of land transportations, and the continual waste of men in every attempt to reinforce the southern States, are almost insuperable objections to marching another detachment from the army on the North River; nor do I see how it is possible to give effectual support to those States, and avert the evils which threaten them, while we are inferior in naval force in these Seas.

It is not for me to know in what manner the Fleet of His Most Christian Majesty is to be employed in the W. Indies this summer, or to inquire at what epocha it may be expected on this Coast; but the appearance and aid of it in this Quarter are of such essential importance in any offensive operation, and so necessary to stop the progress of the enemy's arms to the southward, I shall be excused, I am persuaded, for endeavoring to engage your good offices in facilitating an event on which so much depends. For this I have a stronger plea, when I assure you, that General Rochambeau's opinion and wishes concur with mine, and that it is at his instance principally I make to you this address.

If we are happy enough to find your Excellency in sentiment with us, it will be in your power to inform the Count de Grasse of the strength and situation of the enemy's Naval and land force in this Country,

the destination of the French squadron under Admiral Barras, and the intention of the Allied arms if a junction can be formed. At present the B. Fleet lyes within Block Island, and about five leagues from Point Judith.

The Count de Rochambeau and the Chevr. Chastellux agree perfectly in sentiment with me, that, while affrs. remain as they now are, the West India fleet should run immediately to Sandy Hook if there are no concerted operations, where they may be met with all the information requisite, and where most likely it will shut in, or cut off, Adml. Arbuthnot, and may be joined by the Count de Barras. An early and frequent communication from the Count de Grasse would lead to preparatory measures on our part, and be a means of facilitating the operation in hand, or any other, which may be thought more advisable. I know your Excellency's goodness and your zeal for the common cause too well, to offer any thing more as an apology for this liberty; and I persuade myself it is unnecessary for me to declare the respect and attachment, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE STATES.

WEATHERSFIELD, 24 May, 1781.

SIR,

In consequence of a conference held between the Count de Rochambeau and myself at this place, the French army will march, as soon as circumstances will admit, and form a junction with the American upon the North River. The accomplishment of the object, which we have in contemplation, is of the utmost

importance to America, and will, in all probability be attained, unless there should be a failure on our part in the number of men, which will be required for the operation, or the enemy should withdraw a considerable part of their force from the southward. It is in our own power, by proper exertions, to prevent the first ; and, should the last take place, we shall be amply repaid our expenses, by liberating the southern States, where we have found by experience we are only vulnerable.

Upon the calculations, that I have been able in concert with some of the most experienced French and American officers to form, the operation in view will require, in addition to the French army, all the Continental battalions from New Hampshire to New Jersey inclusive to be completed to their full establishment. You must be sensible, that the measures taken for that purpose, in consequence of the last requisition of Congress, have been very far from answering the end ; as few recruits, comparatively speaking, have yet been sent forward, and of those, many have been discharged on account of inability. You must also take into consideration, that a number of those men, who were returned when the requisition was made, have since been taken off by the various casualties incident to an army ; I estimate about one sixth of the number, therefore provision must at this time be made to replace them.

From what has been premised, you will perceive, without my urging further reasons, the necessity I am under of calling upon you in the most earnest manner, to devise means to send into the field without delay the number of men, which have been already voted for the completion of the battalions of your State, and the further deficiency of one sixth just mentioned. The term of three years, or for the war, would undoubtedly be preferable to any shorter period ; but if they cannot be obtained on those conditions, necessity must oblige us to take them for the campaign only, which ought to be reckoned to the last of December. I should hope, that, by proper exertions in collecting and sending forward the men that have been already raised, and compelling by vigorous and decisive methods the delinquent towns to furnish their quotas, the greater part of the men may be collected by the 1st of July.

Arguments surely cannot be wanting to impress the legislature with a true sense of the obligation, which they are under, of furnishing the means now called for. The enemy, counting upon our want of ability, or upon our want of energy, have, by repeated detachments to the southward, reduced themselves in New York to a situation, which invites us to take advantage of it ; and, should the lucky moment be lost, it is to be feared that they will, after subduing the southern States, raise a force in them, sufficient to hold them, and return again to the northward with such a number of men, as will render New York secure against any force, which we can at this time of day raise or maintain. Our allies in this country expect and depend upon being supported by us in the attempt, which we are about to make, and those in Europe will be astonished, should we neglect the favorable opportunity, which is now offered.

As it is probable, that some militia, in addition to the full complement of Continental troops, may be necessary to support communications and other purposes, you will be pleased to direct ——— men to be held in readiness to march within one week after I shall call for them, to serve three months after they have joined the army. And I would take the liberty of requesting, that the executive may be vested with full powers, during the recess, to comply with any further requisition I may make for men, provisions, or for the means of transportation, which last may be most essential in the course of our operations, should it become necessary to bring provisions or stores from a distance.

I shall be glad to be favored with an answer as soon as possible, with an assurance of what I may depend upon ; that, if I do not clearly see a prospect of being supported, I may turn my views to a defensive instead of an offensive plan, and save the States and our allies the expense, which would be needlessly incurred by any but an ample and effectual preparation.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] The number of militia requested from Massachusetts was two thousand two hundred, from Connecticut fifteen hundred, from Pennsylvania, sixteen hundred, from New Hampshire four hundred, and from New Jersey five hundred. As the defence of Newport, after the French army should leave it, was to be entrusted to the militia of Rhode Island, no militia were required from that

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
27 May, 1781.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to inform Congress, that I returned from Weathersfield on the evening of the 25th. I met only the Count de Rochambeau at that place, accompanied by the Chevalier de Chastellux. The British fleet having appeared off Block Island, the Count de Barras did not think it prudent to be absent. In consequence of the measures concerted at the late interview, all the French troops, except about two hundred to be left as a guard over their heavy stores and baggage at Providence, are to march as soon as circumstances will admit, and form a junction with me upon the North River. Five hundred militia are to be stationed upon Rhode Island for the preservation of the works, which have been erected, and for the security of the harbor.

Upon a full consideration of affairs in every point of view, an operation against New York has been deemed preferable to making further detachments to the southward, while they can only be sent by land. The principal reasons, which induced to this determination, are as follows: the difficulty and expense of transportation, the lateness of the season, which would throw the troops into the extremity of the heat of summer; the *great* waste of men, which we have ever experienced in so long a march at the

State to join the army. Soon after Pennsylvania was called upon to furnish two thousand five hundred men for the southern army, and its quota under the above call was allotted to the other States.

healthiest season; and, above all, a strong presumption, that the enemy, weakened as they now are by detachments, must either sacrifice the valuable post of New York and its dependencies, or recall a part of their force from the southward to defend them.

The Continental battalions, from New Hampshire to New Jersey inclusive, (supposing them complete,) aided by four thousand French troops, and such a reinforcement of militia as the operation after its commencement may seem to require, have been deemed adequate to the attempt upon New York with its present garrison. But, as the battalions of those States are still *considerably* deficient, I have written in the most pressing manner to the respective legislatures, to make up such deficiencies with men for the campaign only, if they cannot be obtained for a longer term, and have desired the governors to hold certain numbers of militia ready for service, should I have occasion to call for them. I am however determined to require no more, than are absolutely necessary. I shall also call on the State of Pennsylvania to hold sixteen hundred militia in readiness.

Congress have been made so fully acquainted with the difficulties of every kind, under which the military department labors, that they must be sensible that nothing but the most vigorous exertions on the part of the States to supply men, provisions, and the means of transportation, can enable me to prosecute to effect the operations, which I have agreed, in conjunction with the army of our ally, to undertake, or

indeed any other. At the time I made my requisitions upon them, I summed up every argument in my power to induce a compliance; but, should I find any hesitation, I shall hope for the countenance and support of Congress.

I am very apprehensive of a formidable invasion of the northern frontier, as the enemy from Canada are undoubtedly collecting in considerable force at Crown Point. Should this be the case, it will cause a very unfortunate diversion, and be very embarrassing just at this time, when our whole force will be required here. The necessity, which I clearly foresee we shall be under, of carrying every man, who can be spared from other duties, into the field, induces me to request an order for such men of the invalid corps at Boston and Philadelphia, as are fit for garrison duty, may be ordered to march to West Point, where their services will be the same as those upon which they are now employed, and where they may be very useful.

There has been a necessity of abandoning the post of Fort Schuyler, and removing the garrison and stores to the German Flats. The barracks had been, the beginning of this month, consumed by fire, and the works so exceedingly damaged by the heavy rain storm that they were rendered indefensible; nor could they be repaired in any reasonable time by the number of men, who could be spared as a garrison. Brigadier-General Clinton recommended the evacuation of the post, as the only alternative, to which I the more readily consented, as it had been for some

time past the opinion of the officers best acquainted with that part of the country, that a post at the German Flats would be more easily supported, and equally advantageous to the security of the frontier. Upon my return I found your Excellency's favors of the 17th and 20th, and Mr. Secretary Thomson's of the 10th. I shall pay due attention to their contents. I am, &c.

TO JOHN SULLIVAN, IN CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
29 May, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have been favored with your two letters of the 2d & 17th of May; the former reached me at Weathersfield after I had met the Count de Rochambeau at that place, from which time to the present moment my whole attention has been so occupied by a variety of concerns that I have been hitherto involuntarily prevented from doing myself the pleasure of writing to you.

No Arguments were necessary to convince me of the very great public utility, which would result from the success of the plan, you proposed laying before Congress.—Had I been unapprized of the advantages, which might be derived to our cause from a successful attempt, or even a powerful diversion in that quarter, the reasons you have offered would have carried irrefragable demonstration with them, and induced me to be of your opinion. But the perplexed, distressed and embarrassed state of our affairs, on ac-

count of supplies, (with which you are well acquainted,) the languid efforts of the States to procure men, and the insuperable difficulties in the way of transportation, would, I apprehend, have rendered the scheme (however devoutly to be wished and desired) abortive in the first instance. And I must inform you, that there is yet another obstacle, which makes the attempt you have suggested *absolutely impracticable* with the means you propose, but which I dare not commit to paper, for fear of the same misfortune, which has already happened to some of my letters.

You will have seen before the receipt of this, by my public letter to Congress of the 27th instant, the result of the deliberations of the Count de Rochambeau and myself at Weathersfield. That plan, upon the maturest consideration, and after combining all the present circumstances and future prospects, appeared, (tho' precarious,) far the most eligible of any we could possibly devise, whilst we are inferior at sea. The object was considered to be of greater magnitude, and more within our reach, than any other. The weakness of the garrison of New York, the centrical position for drawing together men and supplies, and the spur, which an attempt against that place, would give to every exertion, were among the reasons, which prompted to that undertaking, and which promised the fairest prospect of success, unless the enemy should recall a considerable part of their force from the southward. And even in this case, the same measure, which might produce disappointment in one

quarter, would certainly in the event afford the greatest relief in another. While an opportunity presents itself of striking the enemy a fatal blow, I will persuade myself, the concurring exertions of Congress, of the several States immediately concerned, and of every individual in them, who is well affected to our cause, will be united in yielding every possible aid on the occasion. At this crisis, while I rejoice at the appointment of the minister of finance, I have sincerely to regret, that the ministers of the other departments have not also been appointed, especially a minister of war. At the same time I am happy to learn, the mode of promotion is on the point of being finally established. With the highest sentiments of regard, I am, &c.[1]

[1] This letter was intercepted by the enemy, sent to the British ministry, and published in the *London Gazette* on the 14th of July. Others of a similar tenor were also intercepted, and Sir Henry Clinton seems to have considered them as written for that purpose, and designedly put in the way of being taken. It has been said that he believed they were meant to deceive, and that Washington's plans were actually the reverse of those mentioned in the letters. British historians have adopted this idea, and commended it as an evidence of well-timed address on the part of the American general. *Annual Register for 1781*, p. 123.—ANDREWS, *History of the Late War*, vol. iv., p. 198. It is certain, however that no such deception was intended, and that the letters expressed the real designs of the Commander-in-chief. The first impressions of Sir Henry Clinton on the subject were confirmed by a confidential letter from the Marquis de Chastellux to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, intercepted nearly at the same time, in which the writer stated that a combined attack on New York had been determined upon, and took to himself much credit for bringing over Count de Rochambeau to General Washington's opinion. The letter also contained free remarks on the deportment of the French commander, and the reserve in which he held himself as to consulting with his subordinate officers. A copy of this letter was carefully transmitted from New York to Count de Rochambeau, it being doubtless deemed well suited to breed strife in the French camp. It had not this effect, but it was received with displeasure by Count de Rochambeau. "I sent for the Marquis de Chastellux," said he; "I showed him the

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
1 June, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 22d & 27th of April, inclosing copies of your letters to Congress.

The difficulties which you daily encounter and surmount with your small force, add not a little to your reputation ; and I am pretty well assured, that, should you be obliged finally to withdraw from South and even from North Carolina, it would not be attributed to your want either of abilities or of exertion, but to the true cause, the want of means to support the war in them. I feel for your mortification at the loss of the day before Camden, after it seemed so much in your favor; but I hope you will have found, that the enemy suffered severely, as in their publication of the affair in the New York paper they confess the loss of two hundred. The reduction of Fort Watson does honor to General Marion and Colonel Lee.

I have lately had an interview with Count de Rochambeau at Weathersfield. Our affairs were very attentively considered in every point of view, and it

letter ; I then threw it into the fire, and left him a prey to his own reflections." —*Mémoires de Rochambeau*, tom. i., p. 274.—*Sparks.*

"I have already given you my opinion (in some late Letters) with respect to my moveable Property—after removing the most valuable, and least bulky articles—the rest, with the Buildings must take their Chance.—I am prepared for the worst that can happen to them, to hear therefore of their being plundered, or burnt, will be no Surprise to me.—In case a Body of Troops should come into that Part of the Country (belonging to the enemy) public, as well as private considerations, require that Horses and Stock of all kinds should be driven out of their reach."—*Washington to Lund Washington*, 31 May, 1781.

was finally determined to make an attempt upon New York with its present garrison, in preference to a southern operation, as we had not the decided command of the water. You will readily suppose the reasons, which induced this determination, were the inevitable loss of men from so long a march, more especially in the approaching hot season, and the difficulty, I may say impossibility, of transporting the necessary baggage, artillery, and stores by land. I am in hopes, if I am supported as I ought to be by the neighboring States in this, which you know has always been their favorite operation, that one of these consequences will follow, that the enemy will be expelled from the most valuable position which they hold upon the continent, or they will be obliged to recall part of their force from the southward to defend it. Should the latter happen, you will be most essentially relieved by it. The French troops will begin their march this way as soon as certain circumstances will admit. I can only give you the outlines of our plan. The dangers, to which letters are exposed, make it improper to commit to paper the particulars; but as matters ripen I will keep you as well informed as circumstances will allow.

A detachment of between fifteen hundred and two thousand men sailed from New York about the 13th of May. I advised Baron Steuben of this, and desired him to communicate it to you. I presume they will either stop in the Chesapeake Bay or in Cape Fear, except the operations of the Spaniards in the

Floridas should call for reinforcement to that quarter. But I can hardly flatter myself, that they will attend to the preservation of St. Augustine. Pensacola, we are told, has fallen.

The Marquis de Lafayette informed me, that about eight hundred recruits would be ready to march from Virginia the latter end of May. I have no certain accounts from Maryland lately; but I was told by a gentleman from thence, that about four hundred might be expected to march in April. I make no doubt but you are kept regularly advised by the superintending officers. I have not heard, that General Wayne had left Yorktown, but I have reason to believe he has gone before this time. If no fresh discontents arise among those troops, the detachment with Wayne will be a most valuable acquisition to you.[1] They are chiefly the old soldiers, and completely furnished with every necessary. I am, &c.

[1] Wayne's detachment marched from Yorktown, in Pennsylvania, on the 26th of May.

"There has been a mutiny in the Pennsylvania line at York Town previous to their marching. Wayne like a good officer, quelled it soon. Twelve of the fellows stepped out and persuaded the line to refuse to march in consequence of the promises made them not being complied with. Wayne told them of the disgrace they brought on the American arms while in Jersey in general, and themselves in particular; that the feelings of the officers on that occasion were so wounded that they had determined never to experience the like, and that he beg'd they would now fire either on him and them, or on those villains in front. He then called on such a platoon. They presented at the word, fired and killed six of the villains. One of the others, badly wounded, he ordered to be bayonnetted. The soldier on whom he called to do it, recovered his piece, and said he could not for he was his comrade. Wayne then drew a pistol and said he would kill him. The fellow then advanced and bayonnetted him. Wayne then marched the line by divisions around the dead, and the rest of the fellows are ordered to be hanged. The line marched the next day southward mute as a fish."—*Wm. J. Livingston to Col. Webb*, 28 May, 1781.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
4 June, 1781.

SIR,

I had last evening the honor of receiving your favor of the 31st of May by the Duke de Lauzun, who informs me, that he is authorized by your Excellency and Count de Barras to enter into a free communication with me upon the subject of the council of war held on board the Duc de Bourgogne, and to request my opinion upon the propriety of their determination.[1]

[1] Intelligence had been brought to Count de Rochambeau by his son and Count de Barras, that a strong armament had departed from Brest, or would immediately depart, under Count de Grasse, for the West Indies; and that, after he had passed the Azores, Count de Grasse would detach a convoy with somewhat more than six hundred recruits, escorted by the armed vessel *Sagittaire*, and destined to unite with the French army at Newport. Money for the army and navy was also to be brought by the *Sagittaire*. The news was likewise entrusted to Count de Rochambeau alone, that Count de Grasse had orders to sail with his fleet to the coast of the United States in the month of July or August, to relieve the squadron of M. de Barras; and in case M. de Rochambeau should march from Newport to unite with General Washington before the arrival of Count de Grasse's fleet, then the squadron of Barras was to retire to the harbor of Boston for security, as it was supposed that, without the protection of the French army on shore, the vessels would be in danger of a naval attack from the enemy with a superior force.—*Mémoires de Rochambeau*, tom. i., p. 270.

It having been decided at the conference between the American and French commanders, held at Weathersfield, that the French army should leave Newport and march to the North River, the manner of disposing of the French fleet was taken into consideration immediately after the return of Count de Rochambeau. The result is explained in the following extract from a letter written by him to General Washington:

"The Count de Barras, instead of going to Boston according to his orders, has held a council of war, the result of which I send here enclosed. I hope your Excellency will as soon as possible send an order, that the militia, who are to be stationed on this Island, be raised to the number of one thousand. They will be joined by four hundred men, whom I shall leave under the orders of M. de Choisy, a brigadier-general, and a very good officer. I think that the

I must confess to your Excellency, that there is weight in the reasons, which are offered for the detention of his Majesty's fleet in the harbor of Newport, in preference to its going round to Boston; but as I cannot think, that it will be as safe in all possible cases in the harbor of Newport, after a greater part of the French army has been withdrawn, as it would be in the harbor of Boston, I must adhere to my opinion, and to the plan fixed at Weathersfield, as most eligible, all circumstances considered. I would not, however, set up my single judgment against that of so many gentlemen of experience, more especially as the matter partly depends upon a knowledge of marine affairs, of which I candidly confess my ignorance. I would, therefore, in order to avoid delay, rest the matter upon the following footing. If your Excellency, the Count de Barras, and the other gentlemen should, upon a further consideration of the subject, aided by any new informations, which you may have received, still think it most advisable to

State of Massachusetts may furnish the five hundred men, that have been demanded by the council of war for the surety of the squadron, and that it is suitable that your Excellency should send to M. de Choisy an order to convene a greater number in case of need, and letters for the governors of the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

"It is useless to say to your Excellency, that one of the chief reasons, that decided the council of war to keep the squadron at Rhode Island, was the fear lest America should look upon this change from Newport to Boston as a retreat. The desire to be nearer for our future operations, when the superior naval force expected in the course of the summer shall arrive in these seas, has been another reason. Your Excellency knows that the harbor of Boston is very unfavorable at this season, on account of the south-west winds, that blow almost continually. The junction of M. de Barras with the forces that might come, would perhaps be delayed for a month, and consequently all the operations depending on it."—*MS. Letter*, Newport, May 31st.

adhere to the former resolution of the council, you may make use of the enclosed letters to the governors of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which are left open for your inspection. If, on the contrary, you should change your opinions, the letters may be destroyed, as that which was written by me to the governor of Rhode Island from Weathersfield will be sufficient for the purpose of calling out five hundred militia for the present, and such further numbers as exigencies may require.

At any rate, I could wish that the march of the troops might now be hurried as much as possible. The strides, which the enemy are making to the southward, demand a collection of our force in this quarter, that we may endeavor to commence our operation. I know of no measure, which will be so likely to afford relief to the southern States, in so short a time, as a serious menace against New York. This your Excellency may remember was a principal inducement for our undertaking that operation, in preference to the other, which was spoken of; and I assure you the calls upon me from the southward are so pressing, that nothing but seeing our preparations against New York in some degree of forwardness will content them, or convince them that they are likely to derive any advantages from the force, which they see detained here. I have forwarded your Excellency's despatch to the Minister by a Gentleman in the Quarter Master's department.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] "I fear, from the purport of the letter you did me the honor to write from N:

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
6 June, 1781.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favors of the 28th May with their several enclosures.

I have written to the Board of War, on the subject of the removal of the convention troops, and have given it as my opinion, with my reasons, that

Port on the 9th, that my sentiments respecting the council of war held on board the Duke de Burgogne the 31st of May, have been misconceiv'd, and I shall be very unhappy if they receive an interpretation different from the true intent and meaning of them. If this is the case, it can only be attributed to my not understanding the business of the Duke de Lauzun perfectly. I will rely therefore on your goodness and candor to explain, and rectify the mistake, if any has happened. My *wishes* perfectly coincided with the determination of the Board of War to continue the Fleet at Rhode Island, provided it could remain there in safety, with the force required, and did not impede the march of the Army towards the North River. But when Duke Lauzun informed me, that my opinion of the propriety and safety of this measure was required by the Board, and that he came hither at the particular desire of the Counts Rochambeau and de Barras, to obtain it, I was reduced to the painful necessity of delivering a sentiment different from that of a most respectable Board, or of forfeiting all pretensions to candor by the concealment of it. Upon this ground it was I wrote to the Generals to the effect I did, and not because I was dissatisfied at the alteration of the plan agreed to at Weathersfield. My fears for the safety of the Fleet, which I am now perswaded, were carried too far, were productive of a belief that the Generals, when seperated, might feel uneasy at every misterious preparation of the enemy, and occasion a fresh call for militia—this had some weight in my determination to give Boston (where I was sure no danger could be encountered but that of a blockade) a preference to Newport, where under *some circumstances*, though not such as were likely to happen, something might be enterprized.

"The Fleet being at Rhode Island is attended certainly with many advantages in the operations proposed, and I entreat you, and the Gentlemen who were of opinion that it ought to be risqued there for these purposes, will be assured that I have a high sense of the obligation you mean to confer on America by that resolve, and that your zeal to promote the common cause and my anxiety for the safety of so valuable a fleet were the only motives which gave birth to the apparent difference in our opinions."—*Washington to the Chevalier de Chastellux*, 13 June, 1781.

they had best for the present be halted in Pennsylvania. An exchange of those troops, upon proper terms, would certainly be a desirable thing; but under present circumstances I do not think it would be advisable to give the enemy any reinforcement of privates. Every man they get adds immediately to their force. Many of those, whom we obtain in exchange, are out of their term of service, and consequently lost to us.

It is as much my wish, as it can be your Excellency's, that General Gates's affair should be brought to a decision. You must be convinced, that nothing has been left undone by me to effect that purpose. General Gates informs me, that he cannot think of serving, until the matter shall have been properly investigated, and that he shall retire in the mean time to Virginia. I see no probability of any thing further being done until there shall be some recess in southern operatians.

I hope the rules of promotion, which Congress have been pleased to establish, will be generally satisfactory. Individuals may be affected by the change of mode, but it will be impossible to devise a plan, which will not interfere in some degree with particular interests. I send your Excellency by this conveyance duplicate of my letters, the original was taken in last week's mail. The communication by the post from hence to Philadelphia has become so dangerous, that I cannot in future trust any despatches of importance by him, and I beg you will observe the same rule. The parties which are sent out know the exact time at which he may be expected, and cannot fail of secur-

ing him. They have not the same opportunity of intercepting expresses, as their times of riding are uncertain. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO JOHN MATHEWS, IN CONGRESS.

DEAR SIR, NEW WINDSOR, 7 June, 1781.

* * * * * *

The freedom of your communications is highly pleasing to me. The portrait you have drawn of our affairs is strictly agreeable to the life, and you do me but justice in supposing, that my mind is fortified against, or rather prepared for, the most distressing accts. that can be given of them. It would not be the part of friendship, therefore, to conceal any circumstance, from an unwillingness to give pain, especially as the knowledge of them, to a man determined not to sink under the weight of perplexities, may be of the utmost importance. But we must not despair; the game is yet in our own hands; to play it well is all we have to do, and I trust the experience of error will enable us to act better in future. A cloud may yet pass over us, individuals may be ruined, and the Country at large, or particular States, undergo temporary distress; but certain I am, that it is in our power to bring the war to a happy conclusion.

My public letters to Congress, and in a more especial manner my private communications to Governor Rutledge, will bring you fully acquainted with the situation of things in this quarter, and the prospects before us. How far we shall be able to extri-

[1] Read in Congress, June 12th.

cate ourselves from the first, and realize the latter, time only can shew. I have great expectations from the appointment of Mr. Morris, but they are not unreasonable ones; for I do not suppose, that by art magick he can do more than recover us by degrees from the labyrinth into which our finance is plunged.

I am very sorry for the disagreeable situation of our suffering soldiery at Charles Town, and wish they could be relieved without adding to the pressure under which we at present groan. How far it is in General Greene's power to liberate, by exchange, our prisoners in that quarter I know not; but all the authority I can give to do this, he has, reserving the Troops of convention from his disposal. With these I have plague enough. In a late interview between the two Commissaries of Prisoners, Mr. Loring refused to Exchange General Burgoyne, unless the prisoners taken at the Cedars are allowed for, which is opposed by a resolve of Congress; and has actually refused to pay a debt of privates, which three months ago he promised to do. Mrs. Washington, who has been very unwell for some time past, joins me in respectful complimts. to Mrs. Mathews.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR JEFFERSON.

NEW WINDSOR, 8 June, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have had the honor of receiving your Excellency's favors of the 9th and 28th May.

The progress, which the enemy are making in

Virginia, is very alarming, not only to the State immediately invaded, but to all the rest; as I strongly suspect, from the most recent European intelligence, they are endeavoring to make as large seeming conquests as possible, that they may urge the plea of *uti possidetis* in the proposed mediation. Your Excellency will be able to judge of the probability of this conjecture from the circular letter of the President of Congress of the 1st instant.[1]

Were it prudent to commit a detail of our Plans and expectations to paper, I could convince your Excellency by a variety of reasons, that my presence is essential to the operations, which have lately been concerted between the French commanders and myself, and which are to open in this quarter, provided the British keep possession of New York. There have lately been rumors of an evacuation of that place, but I do not place confidence in them. Should I be supported by the neighboring States in the manner which I expect, the enemy will, I hope, be reduced to the necessity of recalling part of their force from the southward to support New York, or they will run the most imminent risk of being expelled, with a great loss of stores, from that post, which is to them invaluable while they think of prosecuting the war in America; and should we, by a lucky coincidence of circumstances, gain a naval superiority, their ruin would be inevitable. The prospect of giving relief to the southern States, by an operation in this quarter, was the principal inducement for un-

[1] See this letter in the *Secret Journal of Congress*, vol. i., p. 221.

dertaking it. Indeed we found, upon a full consideration of our affairs in every point of view, that, without the command of the water, it would be next to impossible for us to transport the artillery, baggage, and stores of the army to so great a distance; and, besides, that we should lose at least one third of our force by desertion, sickness, and the heats of the approaching season, even if it could be done.

Your Excellency may probably ask whether we are to remain here for the above reasons, should the enemy evacuate New York, and transfer the whole war to the southward. To that I answer without hesitation, that we must in such case follow them at every expense, and under every difficulty and loss; but that, while we remain inferior at sea, and there is a probability of giving relief by diversion, (and that perhaps sooner than by sending reinforcements immediately to the point in distress,) good policy dictates the trial of the former.

Give me leave, before I take leave of your Excellency in your public capacity, to express the obligations I am under for the readiness and zeal with which you have always forwarded and supported every measure, which I have had occasion to recommend through you, and to assure you, that I shall esteem myself honored by a continuation of your friendship and correspondence, should your country permit you to remain in the private walk of life. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] It was the strong desire of the people of Virginia, that Washington would take command of the army in that State. In the letter, to which the above was a reply, Mr. Jefferson had written:

TO COLONEL WILLIAM CRAWFORD.

NEW WINDSOR, 9 June, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Randolph delivered me your letter of the 23d ulto.—and sometime ago I was favored with another from you. Give me leave to thank you most sincerely for your kind attention to my interests, and to assure you that I shall ever hold in grateful recollection your friendly endeavors to serve me. My whole time is, and has been since I came into the service, so much engrossed by the public duties of my station, that I have totally neglected all my private concerns, which are declining every day, and may, possibly, end in capital losses, if not absolute ruin, before I am at liberty to look after them.

"We are too far removed from the other scenes of war to say whether the main force of the enemy be within this State; but I suppose they cannot anywhere spare so great an army for the operations of the field. Were it possible for this circumstance to justify in your Excellency a determination to lend us your personal aid, it is evident from the universal voice, that the presence of their beloved countryman, whose talents have been so long successfully employed in establishing the freedom of kindred States, to whose person they have still flattered themselves they retained some right, and have ever looked up as their dernier resort in distress, that your appearance among them, I say, would restore full confidence of salvation, and would render them equal to whatever is not impossible. I cannot undertake to foresee and obviate the difficulties, which stand in the way of such a resolution. The whole subject is before you, of which I see only detached parts, and your judgment will be formed in view of the whole. Should the danger of this State, and its consequence to the Union, be such as to render it best for the whole that you should repair to its assistance, the difficulty would then be how to keep men out of the field.

"I have undertaken to hint this matter to your Excellency, not only on my own sense of its importance to us, but at the solicitations of many members of weight in our legislature, not yet assembled to speak their own desires. A few days will bring to me that period of relief, which the constitution has prepared for those oppressed with the labors of my office; and a long declared resolution of relinquishing it to abler hands has prepared my way for retirement to a private station. Still, however, as an individual citizen I should feel the comforta-

With respect to the round bottom, I can give you little or no information—as far as a bad memory serves me (for I have no papers by me to refer to), I located it in the office of Mr. Thom's Lewis, surveyor of Augusta, and laid some rights, which I had purchased, upon it, to the amount of the contents of your survey, but what has been done in the matter since, I know not,—nor am I quite certain that all that I have here said was actually done. If without giving yourself much trouble you could enquire into this matter, and pursue the necessary measures to secure this Land for me, I shall acknowledge it as an act of kindness, will repay any expense you may be run to in the prosecution of the business, and make grateful returns when it is in my power to do so. I

ble effects of your presence, and have (what I thought could not have been) an additional motive for that gratitude, esteem, and respect, with which I have the honor to be, &c."—Charlottesville, May 28th.

In writing to Mr. Jones, a delegate in Congress from Virginia, on the same subject, Washington said: "Nobody, I persuade myself, can doubt my inclination to be immediately employed in the defence of that country where all my property and connexions are, but there are powerful objections to my leaving this army. Neither time nor prudence will allow me to go into a detail of them on paper. One only I will name, which is, that no other person has power to command the French troops, who are now about to form a junction with this army. Let it suffice for me to add, that I am acting on a great scale; that temporary evils must be endured, where there is no remedy at hand; that I am not without hopes that the tables may be turned; but, these being contingent, I can promise no more than my utmost exertions."—June 7th.

"Your presence, my dear General, would do a great deal. Should these detachments be increased to three or four thousand, and the French army come this way, leaving one of our generals at Rhode Island, and two or three about New York and in the Jerseys, you might be on the offensive in this quarter, and there would be a southern army in Carolina. Your presence would do immense good, but I should wish you to have a large force. General Washington, before he personally appears, should be strong enough to hope success."—*Lafayette to Washington*, Camp, between the Rappahannock and North Anna, June 3d.

could wish to obtain a Patent for it, after obviating other claims, for I have heard I think, that there is a caveat to prevent my obtaining a patent.

Can you tell me how matters stand with respect to my Racoon Tract? Are the People who live on it still unconvinced of my having a Patent for it? If on the contrary they know, or believe that I have such a Patent, what do they propose to do in that case? It is hard upon me to have property which has been fairly obtained disputed and withheld. On the other hand, if the settlers on the Land either through ignorance or disbelief of its being mine, have made improvements of value thereon, and wish to live on and enjoy them, I would agree that they should remain seven years longer upon their respective Plantations, on terms which should in their own eyes appear moderate and easy, even if it amounted to nothing more than a bare acknowledgment, subject, nevertheless, at the expiration of that term to such reasonable Rents as the Land and Improvements are worth; and shall be adjudged just for both Landlord and Tenant. Upon these terms I would give Leases for lives, or a great length of years, provided also (in the latter case especially) some mode can be adopted to let the value of the Rents every seven or ten years, be so raised as to bear some proportion to the increased value of the Land.

I shall thank you for giving me information respecting this matter—and the round bottom, and in general, what situation my landed affairs in that country are in, it not being impossible, nor yet very unlikely

(as I can give no attention to them myself) that my other Patented Lands may be settled upon and claimed in the same way as that is on Racoon. I pray you also to be so kind as to let me know how Simpson employs his time, his force, and my mill. He has not, that I can hear of, rendered any account or paid one farthing for the profits of my mill or share of the Plantation, since he has been on the Land, which is poor encouragement for me to leave my property in his hands. Does the boundary as it is now settled between Virginia and Pensylvania affect the property of these Lands which were surveyed and Patented in Virginia, but which by the late line are thrown into Pensylvania? This, I believe, is the case with respect to my tract on Racoon creek, if no more of it. * * *

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
13 June, 1781.

SIR,

I am honored by your Excellency's favors of the 9th and 10th instant, and with their very interesting communications, which you may be assured will be kept perfectly secret. I flatter myself, that the whole convoy will arrive in safety in some of the eastern ports, as I believe the British ships are all cruising off the Hook.[1]

[1] This was the convoy of French vessels, with recruits sent by Count de Grasse, under the escort of a fifty-gun ship, and mentioned in a note to the letter above, dated June 4th. Two thirds of the convoy and the ship had arrived at Boston; the other third had been dispersed in a gale near the coast.

The Count de Barras has furnished me with the result of the second council of war. I have so high a respect for the opinions of the gentlemen, who composed it, that I should have been satisfied had they barely mentioned their adherence to their former determination ; but the new arguments, which have been introduced in favor of the detention of the *fleet*[1] at *Rhode Island*, leave me no room to doubt the propriety of the measure.

I am so fully convinced, that your Excellency will make no unnecessary delay in your march, that I have only occasion to repeat my former request, that it may be commenced as soon as circumstances will admit. My last accounts from the Marquis de Lafayette were of the 3d of June. The British army, in very considerable force, were then between Richmond and Fredericksburg ; their destination was uncertain ; but from their superiority they were at full liberty to go wherever they pleased. The enclosed copy of a letter from the President of Congress to me will give your Excellency the latest intelligence from South Carolina.

Your requisitions to the *Count de Grasse* go to every thing I could wish. You cannot, in my opinion, too strongly urge the necessity of bringing a body of troops with him, more especially as I am very dubious whether our force can be drawn together by the time he proposes to be here. Now *four thousand or five thousand men*, in addition to what we shall certainly have by that time, would, almost

[1] Words in italics were written in cypher.

beyond a doubt, enable us with the assistance of the *fleet* to carry our object. It is to be regretted, that the *Count's* stay upon the *coast* will be limited. That consideration is an additional reason for wishing a force equal to giving a speedy determination to the operation.[1]

Your Excellency will be pleased to recollect, that New York was looked upon by us as the only practicable object under present circumstances; but should we be able to secure a *naval superiority*, we may perhaps find others more practicable and equally advisable. If the frigate should not have sailed, I wish you to

[1] Count de Grasse wrote as follows to Count de Rochambeau:

"His Majesty has entrusted me with the command of the naval force destined for the protection of his possessions in South America, and those of his allies in North America. The force, which I command, is sufficient to fulfill the offensive plans, which it is the interest of the allied powers to execute, that they may secure an honorable peace. If the men-of-war are necessary for fulfilling the projects, which you have in view, it will be useful to the service, that M. de Barras or M. Destouches be apprized of it, and that pilots be sent to us skillful and well instructed, as the French ships have a larger draft of water than the British. It will not be till the 15th of July, at the soonest, that I shall be on the coast of North America; but it will be necessary, by reason of the short time that I have to stay in that country (also being obliged to leave it on account of the season), that every thing necessary for the success of your projects should be in readiness, that not a moment for action may be lost."—*MS. Letter*, dated at Sea, March 29th.

The above letter was sent by the convoy. Count de Rochambeau despatched a vessel immediately for the West Indies, with full intelligence to Count de Grasse concerning the plans in view, and also the strength, situation, and apparent designs of the enemy. He recommended to him to enter the Chesapeake on his way, as there might be an opportunity of striking an important stroke there, and then to proceed immediately to New York, and be ready to co-operate with the allied armies in an attack upon that city. He likewise requested, that, if possible, five or six thousand land troops might be brought from the West Indies.

He writes thus to General Washington; but in his *Mémoires* he takes somewhat more credit to himself respecting the proposed operation in the Chesapeake.

explain this matter to the *Count de Grasse;* as, if I understand it, you have in your communication to him confined our views to *New York* alone. And, instead of advising him to run immediately into the *Chesapeake*, will it not be best to leave him to judge, from the information he may from time to time receive of the situation of the *enemy's fleet* upon this *coast*, which will be the most advantageous quarter for him to make his appearance in? In the letter, which was written to the minister from Weathersfield, in which he was requested to urge the *Count* to come this way with his *whole fleet*, Sandy Hook was men-

"I presented to M. de Grasse," says he, "a picture of the distresses of the southern States, and above all of Virginia, which had nothing to oppose the inroads of Lord Cornwallis but a small body of troops under Lafayette, who was sustained only by his good conduct and the nature of the country intersected by many rivers. I transmitted to M. de Grasse the articles of the conference at Weathersfield. I observed to him, that he ought to know better than myself the possibility of forcing a passage into the harbor of New York, since, in circumstances nearly similar, M. d'Estaing, under whose orders he had served, had made an ineffectual proposal to the pilots, in offering them an enormous sum to take his vessels across the bar, which they did not venture to attempt. In short, I represented to him, as my private opinion, that an enterprise in the Chesapeake Bay against Lord Cornwallis would be the most practicable, and the least expected by the enemy, who counted on our distance from that quarter. I requested him to solicit strenuously from the governor of St. Domingo the use for three months of the French brigade under M. de St. Simon, which was destined to act with the Spaniards, who, it appeared to me, would have no employment for it during the campaign. I desired him, also, to effect a loan in our colonies of twelve hundred thousand francs, which might insure the success of this operation. I concluded by entreating him to dispatch to me a frigate as soon as possible, with his answer, that I might arrange with General Washington our march by land to join him at the point assigned in the Chesapeake." —*Mémoires*, tom. ii., p. 277.

These schemes of Count de Rochambeau do not appear in his letters to General Washington. There are several indications, that he did not approve an attack upon New York, and only yielded his assent to what he discovered to be the wish of the American commander.—*Sparks.*

tioned as the most desirable point; because, by coming suddenly there, he would certainly *block* up any *fleet*, which might be *within*; and he would even have a very good chance of *forcing* the *entrance*, before dispositions could be made to *oppose* him. Should the *British fleet* not be there, he could follow them to the *Chesapeake*, which is always accessible to a superior force. I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR CLINTON.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
21 June, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received a letter from Brigadier-General Clinton, of the 15th, enclosing the examination of two prisoners who were taken lately by one of his scouts; from whence it appears the enemy in Canada have not made any movements in force, or preparations for an incursion; and indeed this intelligence corresponds so exactly with that which has been received through other channels, that I cannot but regret having sent the reinforcement to the northward, at a time when the aid of every man was so essential to the success of the operations in contemplation.

As it will be indispensably necessary, when we advance towards the enemy's lines, to withdraw the regular force from the northward, I have thought proper to advise General Clinton and your Excellency of it, that provision might be made as far as practicable to replace these troops with the men engaged

for the campaign and the three years' service.[1] At the same time that I express my unhappiness at being forced to the measure, and assure your Excellency, that nothing but necessity could induce me to recall the Continental troops, I wish it may be understood, that, when the moment of operating arrives, there is not any consideration which can persuade me to counteract the plan, that has been concerted between the Conut de Rochambeau and myself. But lest the enemy should attempt to take advantage of their absence, to make inroads on the frontier, in order to distract our attention and cause a diversion in favor of their most important post, I beg leave to recommend in the strongest terms, that every means in your power should be made use of to guard against such an event.

I will also take the liberty to suggest, whether an additional security might not be afforded to those posts, which are exposed to the ravages of the enemy, by my sending a Continental officer to assist in rousing and assembling the force of the country, and to put himself at the head of such militia and volunteers, as might be drawn together on an emergency

[1] In place of the Continental force thus withdrawn, six hundred militia from the Counties of Berkshire and Hampshire were ordered there, with the New York militia. The command was given to Brigadier-General Stark, with instructions (dated June 25th) to oppose any incursion of the enemy and protect the frontier. "I rely upon it, that you will use your utmost exertions to draw forth the force of the country from the Green Mountains, and all the contiguous territory; and I doubt not your requisitions will be attended with success, as your personal influence must be unlimited amongst those people, at whose head you have formerly fought and conquered with so much reputation and glory." Col. Willett was to remain in command on the Mohawk River, "as his popularity in that country will enable him to render essential services there."

from the district of country called Vermont; and whether, in that case, Brigadier-General Stark would not be a proper character to employ on this service, especially as he has already obtained a reputation from his successes in that quarter, is undoubtedly a man of bravery, and has been accustomed to command irregular troops in action. It appears to me, a popular officer in that situation would be extremely advantageous on many accounts. Whether there may be reasons of state against it, I know not. I have, therefore, submitted it to your consideration. I beg your opinion freely on the subject, and have the honor to be with great respect, &c.

TO PRESIDENT REED.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR,
24 June, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

In the course of our expected operations we shall stand in need of a species of troops, which are not at present to be procured either in this army or in any of the States to the northward of Pennsylvania. They are expert Rifle Men. The use of these men will be to fire into the embrasures and to divide the enemy from their parapets when our approaches are carried very near to their Works. Without this can be done, our loss will be immense when we shall come within Musquet Shot—General Lincoln informs me that the enemy made use of this mode at the Siege of Charlestown, and that his Batteries were in

a manner silenced, untill he opposed the same kind of troops and made it as dangerous for the enemy to shew their men as it had been before for him to expose his.—The number which we shall want will be about three hundred, and I shall be exceedingly obliged to your Excellency if you will endeavor to procure so many from the Frontier of Pennsylvania.

Had the Quota of Militia from your State have come to this army, I should have endeavored to have selected the required number from among them. But that not beeing the case—I think it but reasonable that the expence of raising the Rifle Men should be Continental. I have written to this effect to Congress and have requested the president to signify their approbation to Your Excellency if they think proper to accede to it.—I would wish the Corps to be formed into Six Companies of 50 each under the command of a Captain and two Subs—the whole to be commanded by a Major—The term of service to the 1st day of January next. The choice of the officers I shall leave to your Excellency. If Major Parr formerly of the 7th Penna. Regt. would engage in such a service a better officer could not be found for the purpose. The Bounty cannot now be determined, and therefore it will be with you to procure them on as low terms as possible. But that the business may not be retarded for want of proper encouragement, I would wish you to make yourself acquainted with the Sum which will most probably engage them, and offer that, whatever it may be. One of the terms should be that they are to find their

own Rifles, as we have none in Store—I shall be glad to hear as soon as possible what probability there will be of succeeding in this undertaking. The greater part of the men, must be with the Army by the 1st of Augt., or their services will be useless afterwards. I am, &c.

TO COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEAR PEEKSKILL,
30 June, 1781.

SIR,

I had last evening the honor of your Excellency's favor of the 28th, with a postscript of the 29th.

The enemy by sending a detachment into Monmouth County in Jersey to collect Horses, Cattle and other plunder, have so weakened their posts upon the North end of York Island, that a most favorable opportunity seems at this moment to present itself of possessing them by a Coup de maine, which, if it succeeds, will be of the utmost consequence to our future operations. I have for this reason determined to make the attempt on the night of the 2d of July. But as we cannot with the remainder of our own force maintain the advantage should we gain it, I must entreat your Excellency to put your first Brigade under march tomorrow morning, the remaining Troops to follow as quick as possible, and endeavor to reach Bedford by the evening of the 2d of July, and from thence to proceed immediately towards Kingsbridge, should circumstances render it necessary. Your Magazines having been established on the Route by

Crompond it may perhaps be out of your power to make any deviation, but could you make it convenient, you would considerably shorten the distance by marching from Ridgeburg to Salem and from thence to Bedford leaving Crompond upon your right.[1]

There is another matter which appears to me exceedingly practicable upon the same night that we attempt the works upon York Isld. and which I would wish to commit to the execution of the Duke de Lauzun provided his Corps can be brought to a certain point, in time.—It is the surprise of a Corps of light Troops under the command of Colo. Delancey which lies at Morrisania without being covered by any Works. To effect this, the Duke must be at Bedford on the 2d of July by 12 o'clock, if possible, where he will be joined by Colo. Sheldon with 200 Horse and Foot and on his march from thence by about 400 Infantry, both Officers and Men perfectly acquainted with the Country—Upon a supposition that the Duke may be at Bedford at the above mentioned time—and that he will be ready to carry the design into execution, he shall be met there by particular instructions from me and will find good guides. At any rate, I must request your Excellency to send orders to the Duke this evening to continue his march tomorrow morning and to reach Bedford by the Evening of the 2d of July if he cannot be

[1] The French army began its movement for the Hudson on June 10th. Rochambeau received four hundred recruits at Providence, and resumed his march on the 18th. On the 23d he was at Hartford, where he wrote to Washington that he expected to be at Newtown on the 28th. On his part Washington moved his army towards Peekskill.

there by noon. In this latter case the enterprise against Delancey must probably be laid aside and the Legion with the first Brigade of your Army will be at hand to support the detachment upon York Island should they succeed—I shall move down with the remainder of this Army towards Kingsbridge and shall be ready to form a junction with your Excellency below at some point which shall be hereafter agreed upon.

I am certain I need not recommend the proper degree of secrecy to your Excellency—One reason which makes it more than commonly necessary in the Country where you are, is, that the enemy will have emissaries in your Camp in the Garb of peasants with provisions and other matters and will be attentive to every word which they may hear drop.

You will much oblige me by letting me know instantly by return of the line of Expresses whether your first Brigade and the Legion can march tomorrow morning and whether the Duke can be at Bedford by the time first proposed (the 2d of July) at noon.

Under the foregoing circumstances it becomes necessary for me to march from hence on Monday, and I therefore submit it to your Excellency whether it will not be more convenient to both of us to defer our interview untill the Armies shall have proceeded lower down. I shall take care to establish a proper communication between the Columns and to see that a junction is formed before there shall be any danger of an attack from the Enemy. I have, &c.[1]

[1] This letter Col. Cobb was to deliver to Rochambeau and impress upon that

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

The object of your present command,—consisting of two regiments, (formed into four battalions,) under the command of Colonel Scammell and Lieutenant-Colonel Sprout, of a detachment of artillery under the command of Captain Burbeck, of the corps of watermen under the command of Major Darby, and the waterguard under the command of Captain Pray,—is to attempt the surprise of the enemy's posts upon the north end of York Island.

My ideas, as to the most probable mode of attaining this object, have been minutely detailed in the several conversations which we have had upon the subject, and you have been furnished with such papers as I have been able to collect, and upon which my judgment has been formed. But it is not my wish, or desire,

commander the importance of making the attack on the north end of New York Island, and on Delancey's corps. On the 30th Brigadier General Waterbury was ordered to collect all the men he could, and marching light and with four days' provision, form a junction with Colonel Sheldon, at Clapp's in King Street, on the 2d of July, by sunset. He would there be joined also by the French legion, "under the command of the Duke de Lauzun, who is a brigadier in the service of his Most Christian Majesty, and an officer of distinction, long service, and merit. The Duke is to command all the troops that will be assembled at the point mentioned."—*Washington to Brigadier-General Waterbury*, 30 June and 1 July, 1781. Colonel Dayton was ordered to collect all the troops of his brigade, except the company at Wyoming, and march as light as possible towards Kingsbridge (30 June). The three companies of New York State troops were directed to assemble at Bedford on July 1st, and put themselves under the command of Colonel Sheldon. On the 30th, Governor Clinton was informed of the intended movement:

"In fullest confidence I inform you, that I intend to make an attempt by surprise upon the enemy's posts on the north end of York Island, on Monday night. Should we be happy enough to succeed, and be able to hold our conquest, the advantages will be greater than can be well imagined. But I cannot flatter myself, that the enemy will permit the latter, unless I am suddenly and considerably reinforced. I shall march down the remainder of this army, and I have hopes that the French force will be near at hand by that time. But I shall, notwithstanding, direct the alarm-guns and beacons to be fired in case of success; and I have to request, that your Excellency will, upon signals,

that these should be any restraint upon you. Your own observation and the circumstances of the moment must in a great degree govern you.

The success of your enterprise depending absolutely upon secrecy and surprise, it will be wrong to prosecute it a moment after you are discovered, unless the discovery is made so near the works, that you may, by a rapid movement, gain them before the enemy have time to re-collect and put themselves in a posture of defence. Fort George, upon Laurel Hill, ought to be your primary object, because success at that place will open a communication with the main, afford an asylum to the troops, who may be disappointed in other attacks, and secure a retreat in case of necessity to the main body of the army.

Should you carry Fort Knyphausen and Fort Tryon only, you cannot without infinite risk hold them, as we shall not be in a situation to support you from without. I would therefore recom-

communicate the meaning of them to the militia, and put yourself at the head of them, and march with the utmost expedition towards Kingsbridge, bringing with you three or four days' provision at least. In that time I think we shall have so arranged matters as to have little need of the militia suddenly called out. I have, upon a hope that we shall succeed, ordered Brigadier-General Clinton to send down the regular troops immediately. Should circumstances make it necessary, I can countermand the order.—*Washington to Governor Clinton*, 30 June, 1781.

"The Enemy's apprehension of our Intentions & the probability I had Reason to apprehend that their Force would be collected to the North End of the Island on their receiving Information of our Approach, were among the Reasons that induced me to fall upon this Enterprize & added to other Reasons for the necessity of its *sudden* Execution the present stage of the Moon operated for fixing the Time I mentioned—the success of the Enterprise depending on a sudden surprize of the Posts which must be attempted by Night Operations when the Approach can only be concealed. A delay to a fuller Time of the Moon which would greatly expose our Detachments to a Discovery could not be admitted. These Reasons I hope will apologize to your Excellency for my Desire to hasten the March of your Troops, which must be fatigued with their long march which they have already performed.

"Should we be so happy as to succeed in this Attempt it would give us exceeding great Advantage in our future Operations—& indeed save us perhaps the Time of good Part of the Season to establish a communication with York Island.—I am obliged however to confess to your Excellency, that I am not highly sanguine in my Expectations, altho' I think there is a good Probabil-

mend your damaging them as much as you possibly can upon a sudden and relinquishing them. The artillery-men will be proportionably divided to the three attacks ; each party will be provided with two lanterns and two rockets, one of which is to be fired in each work as soon as it is carried.

If complete success should attend the enterprise, not a moment's time should be lost in drawing the boats across the Island from the North River into Haerlem Creek, and securing them under the guns of Fort George, if circumstances will admit of it. But in case of a disappointment, and being obliged to retreat by water, and not being able to pass the enemy's ships and boats, the dernier resort must be a push over to the Jersey shore, and an abandonment of the boats, if they cannot be drawn up the bank and carried off on carriages. It will be very essential, that I should be made acquainted as early as possible with your suc-

ity of succeeding—so great, that I have tho't it expedient to put the Attempt at hazard.

"From my late Information however, & that I may not Risque too much, I have directed the Officer commdg. the Detachment (Majr. Genl. Lincoln, who will Tomorrow be in a Position for the Purpose) that he shall in Person reconnoitre the situation of the Enemy,—& inform himself by any Means in his Power of their probable Strength & Numbers ; from whence he will be able to determine the Practicability of accomplishg. his Aim—On this Ground the Attempt will be reduced to a Contingency,—Genl. Lincoln having my Instructions to conduct himself eventually agreeable to his own Discoveries & his Judgment of His probable Success or Failure—Should he obtain such Information of the Enemy's Position & Strength as to oblige him to decline the attempt on their Posts—he will then, agreeable to his Instructions throw himself into a Situation to form a Covering Party to the Enterprize to be conducted by the Duke Lauzun."—*Washington to Rochambeau*, 2 July, 1781.

On July 2d Washington wrote to Rochambeau :

"I have this morning received your Excellency's favor of last evening. I think it will be very well for your Excellency to proceed to-morrow to North Castle, where you will continue until you assemble your whole force, unless you should hear from me within that time. Being at North Castle will put you in a direct route to receive your provisions from Crompond, and it will be in a direct way for your troops to advance to White Plains, or any other point below, as circumstances shall appear to demand."

The scheme failed, as is detailed in the letter to Congress, July 6th, *post*. The British had received information of the attempt in time to provide against it.—*Magazine of American History*, June, 1884.

cess, and the extent of it. If complete, you will announce it by the firing of thirteen cannon, at one minute's interval, after all lesser firing and confusion have ceased. If Fort George only is carried, six cannon are to be fired in the same manner. For Fort Knyphausen, Tryon, or both of them, you need not give signals, because you are, as before directed, immediately to relinquish them.

The foregoing is upon a supposition, that the principal object, the attempt upon the works on York Island, is carried into execution; but, should you, upon reconnoitring the enemy to-morrow, find it unadvisable to prosecute the plan, or should you be obliged to give it over on account of an early discovery by the enemy's shipping or boats, I would then have you turn your attention to the support of an attempt, which is also to be made on the morning of the 3d by the Duke de Lauzun upon Delancey's corps lying at Morrisania. To effect this, you will land your men at any convenient place above the mouth of Spiten Devil Creek, and march to the high grounds in front of Kingsbridge, where you will lie concealed until the Duke's attack is announced by firing or other means. You may then dispose of your force in such a manner, in view of the enemy, as to make them think your party larger than it is, which may have the double effect of preventing them from coming over the bridge to turn the Duke's right, and also of preventing any of Delancey's party from escaping that way. Your further operations must depend upon the movements of the enemy and other circumstances.

I expect I shall be myself in the neighborhood of Kingsbridge early in the morning of the 3d, with the remainder of the army. I shall as soon as possible open a communication with you, and give you such orders as the general state of matters may require. If you land, send an officer and small party up the main road to meet me. In case you land upon the east side of the river, above the mouth of Spiten Devil Creek, you will send your boats up along the east shore. If Major Darby receives no particular directions from me, he will proceed with them to King's Ferry. Given at Head-Quarters, near Peekskill, this 1st day of July, 1781.[1]

[1] "Count Fersen will do me the favor to deliver this to your Excellency. The operations of this day are over, and I am sorry to say, that I have not had the

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS'S FERRY,
6 July, 1781.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to inform your Excellency, that the army marched from their camp near Peekskill on the morning of the 2d, without either tents or baggage, and reached Valentine's Hill, about four miles on this side of Kingsbridge, a little after daylight the morning following.

General Lincoln, with a detachment of eight hundred men, fell down the North River in boats, landed near Phillips's House before daylight on the morning of the 3d, and took possession of the ground on this side of Haerlem River, near where Fort Independence formerly stood. This movement was principally in-

happiness to succeed to my wishes, although I think very essential benefit will result to our future operations from the opportunity I have had, in a very full manner, to reconnoitre the position and works of the enemy on the north end of York Island. The particular events of the day I shall do myself the honor to communicate, when I have the pleasure to join your Excellency.

"The American army and the legion of the Duke de Lauzun will march to-morrow to White Plains. If it will be convenient to you, I shall be happy to receive your Excellency with your troops at that place the day after to-morrow. When I shall have an opportunity to converse with your Excellency, I conceive I shall be able to give you such reasons for forming your junction at White Plains in the first instance, as will satisfy you of the utility and fitness of the position for commencing the preparations for our concerted operations of the campaign."—*Washington to Rochambeau*, 3 July, 1781.

"The Commander-in-chief takes the earliest opportunity of expressing his thanks to the Duke de Lauzun, his officers and men, for the very extraordinary zeal manifested by them in the rapid performance of their march to join the American army. And the General also takes occasion to thank the officers and men of the American army, for the alacrity with which they have supported themselves under the fatiguing march of yesterday and last night. The troops, who were engaged to-day, merit his particular thanks,"—*Orderly Book*, July 3d.

tended to support and favor an enterprise, which I had projected against a corps of refugees under the command of Colonel Delancey at Morrisania, and other light troops without the bridge, and which was to have been executed by the Duke de Lauzun with his own legion, Colonel Sheldon's regiment, and a detachment of State troops of Connecticut under the command of Brigadier-General Waterbury. The Duke, notwithstanding the heat of the day of the 2d, marched from Ridgbury, in Connecticut, and reached East Chester very early the next morning; but, upon his arrival there, finding by the firing that General Lincoln had been attacked, and the alarm given, he desisted from the further prosecution of his plan (which could only have been executed to any effect by surprise), and marched to the General's support, who continued skirmishing with the enemy and endeavoring to draw them so far into the country, that the Duke might turn their right and cut them off from their work on the east side of Haerlem River, and also prevent their repassing that river in boats. General Parsons had possessed the heights immediately commanding Kingsbridge, and could have prevented their escape by that passage. Every endeavor of this kind proved fruitless; for I found, upon going down myself to reconnoitre their situation, that all their force, except very small parties of observation, had retired to York Island. This afforded General Duportail and myself the most favorable opportunity of perfecting reconnoitring the works upon the north end of the Island, and making observations,

which may be of very great advantage in future. Finding nothing further could be done, I returned the day before yesterday to this ground, where I expect to be joined this day by his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau, who reached North Castle the 2d instant.

I cannot too warmly express the obligations I am under to the Count, for the readiness with which he detached the Duke de Lauzun, and for the rapidity with which he pushed the march of his main body, that he might have been within supporting distance, had any favorable stroke upon the enemy below given us an opportunity of pursuing any advantage, which might have been gained. General Lincoln had five or six men killed and about thirty wounded in his skirmish.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, July 10th.

The following extract from General Washington's *Diary* will more fully explain the recent operations.

"*July 2d.*—General Lincoln's detachment embarked last night after dark, at or near Teller's Point; and, as his operations were to be the movements of two nights, he was desired to repair to Fort Lee this day, and reconnoitre the enemy's works, position, and strength, as well as he possibly could, and take his ultimate determination from appearances; that is, to attempt the surprise, if the prospect was favorable, or to relinquish it, if it was not; and in the latter case to land above the mouth of Spiten Devil, and cover the Duke de Lauzun in his operation on Delancey's corps. At three o'clock this morning I commenced my march with the Continental army, in order to cover the detached troops and improve any advantages, which might be gained by them. I made a small halt at the New Bridge over the Croton about nine miles from Peekskill, another at the church by Tarrytown till dusk (nine miles more), and completed the remaining part of the march in the night, arriving at Valentine's Hill (at Mile Square) about sunrise. Our baggage and tents were left standing at the camp at Peekskill.

"*3d.*—The length of the Duke de Lauzun's march, and the fatigue of his corps, prevented his coming to the point of action at the hour appointed. In

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS'S FERRY,
13 July, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

Since my last I have received your letters of the 10th, 18th and 28 of June.

I sincerely congratulate you on the favorable turn of affairs announced in your last, and I hope you will be enabled to maintain that superiority, which you seem to be gaining ever Lord Cornwallis. We have had a variety of reports of General Greene's further successes in South Carolina. By some we are told, that both Augusta and Ninety-Six have fallen, but in a letter, which I have just received from Monsieur

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the mean time General Lincoln's party, who were ordered to prevent the retreat of Delancey's corps by the way of Kingsbridge, and prevent succors by that route, were attacked by the Yagers and others; but, on the march of the army from Valentine's Hill, they retired to the Island. Being disappointed in both objects, from the causes mentioned, I did not care to fatigue the troops any more, but suffered them to remain on their arms, while I spent a good part of the day in reconnoitring the enemy's works. In the afternoon we retired to Valentine's Hill, and lay upon our arms. The Duke de Lauzun and General Waterbury lay on the east side of the Brunx River on the East Chester road.

"*4th*—Marched and took a position a little to the left of Dobbs's Ferry, and marked a camp for the French army upon our left. The Duke de Lauzun marched to White Plains, and Waterbury to Horseneck.

"*5th*.—Visited the French army, which had arrived at North Castle.

"*6th*.—The French army formed the junction with the American on the grounds marked out. The legion of Lauzun took a position in advance of the Plains on Chatterton's Hill, west of the River Brunx. This day also the minister of France arrived in camp from Philadelphia."

The American army was encamped in two lines, with the right resting on the Hudson River near Dobbs's Ferry. The French army was stationed on the hills at the left, in a single line reaching to the Bronx River. There was a valley of considerable extent between the two armies.

From Clinton's intelligence we learn that Washington's Head-Quarters were at Jos: Appleby's, "on the Saw Mill Road, about 2½ miles from Hammond's." On the 7th he shifted his quarters from Appleby's to "Thos. Tompkins, 2½

Marbois, he says that Augusta has been taken, and the siege of Ninety-Six raised. Count de Rochambeau formed a junction with me at this camp, (about twelve miles from Kingsbridge,) a few days ago. We are waiting for reinforcements for the Continental line, and of militia, and are in the mean time establishing our communication at Dobbs's Ferry.

I shall shortly have occasion to communicate matters of very great importance to you, so much so, that I shall send a confidential officer on purpose to you. You will in the mean time endeavor to draw together as respectable a body of Continental troops as you possibly can, and take every measure to augment your cavalry. Should the enemy confine themselves to the lower country, you will no doubt pay attention to the formation of magazines above. These will be in every case essential, whether the war continues in Virginia, or whether it will still be carried on in

miles this side of Young's house, on the direct road"; and on the 10th he was reported to be at Hammond's. Appleby's was also described as being "on the Manor of Philipsburgh."

From the Orderly Book, July 6th.—"The Commander-in-chief with pleasure embraces the earliest public opportunity of expressing his thanks to his Excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, for the unremitting zeal with which he has prosecuted his march, in order to form the long wished-for junction between the French and American forces; an event, which must afford the highest degree of pleasure to every friend of his country, and from which the happiest consequences are to be expected. The General entreats his Excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, to convey to the officers and soldiers under his immediate command the grateful sense he entertains of the cheerfulness, with which they have performed so long and laborious a march at this hot season. The regiment of Saintonge is entitled to peculiar ackowledgments for the spirit, with which they continued and supported their march without one day's respite."

South Carolina. Should General Greene come into Virginia in person, you will be good enough to communicate the foregoing to him.

In the present situation of affairs, it is of the utmost importance that a communication by a chain of expresses should be opened between this army and that in Virginia. They are already established from hence to Philadelphia, and if there is none from you to Philadelphia, you will be pleased to take measures for having it done. You will also endeavor to establish such a communication with the coast, as to be able to know whether any troops are detached by sea from Lord Cornwallis's army; for it is more than probable, that, if he finds himself baffled in attempting to overrun Virginia, he will take a strong post at Portsmouth, or Williamsburg, and reinforce New York or South Carolina. Should any detachment be made, you will transmit to me the earliest intelligence. What you say in confidence of the conduct of a certain officer shall be kept a profound secret, and I will contrive means of removing him from the quarter where he is so unpopular.

The Rhode Island regiment is so thinly officered, that Colonel Olney wishes one of the subs. of the light company may be suffered to return, when Captain Olney joins. You will act in this as circumstances may permit. You have the compliments and good wishes of all your friends in the French army. Those of the American are not behindhand with them. With the warmest affection and esteem, I am, &c.

TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS'S FERRY,
13 July, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Your favors of the 2d and 5th instant have afforded me infinite satisfaction, as the measures you are pursuing for subsisting the army perfectly accord with my ideas, and are, I am certain, the only ones, which can secure us from distress or the constant apprehensions of it.[1] Had magazines of any consequence been formed in the different States, in pursuance of the late requisitions of Congress, the disposal of the articles collected at a distance from the army would have merited your attention; but so little has been done in that way, that I imagine you will not think the matter worthy of notice, when I inform you of the trifling quantities which remain on hand. Of flour no magazines have been formed at any place. Of salt meat none was put up in Pennsylvania, Jersey, or New York. There had been, by estimate, seven or eight thousand barrels of meat and fish put up in Connecticut, of which between two and three thousand have come forward, and the remainder is, I believe, in motion. Massachusetts put up very little salt meat, and most of it has been consumed upon the communication by the recruits, or transported to

[1] By a resolve of Congress, Robert Morris, as Superintendnet of Finance, was vested with powers to dispose of the *specific supplies*, which had been required to be furnished by the several States, in such manner as he, with the advice of the Commander-in-chief, should judge best suited to promote the public interest, and answer the purposes of the present campaign.—*Journals*, June 4th. It was the opinion of Mr. Morris that all these supplies should be sold on the best terms that could be obtained, and that the army should in future be supplied by contracts.

Albany. Rhode Island purchased one thousand barrels, of which about six hundred remain at Providence, and I would wish them to be still kept there for a particular purpose. I could never learn, with certainty, how much was put up in New Hampshire; but I have directed all that was at Portsmouth to be transported by water to Providence, as I wish to form a small magazine of salt provision at that place, as I mentioned before, for a particular purpose. No magazines of rum have been formed. We have been in a manner destitute of that necessary article, and what we are now likely to draw from the several States will be from hand to mouth. From the foregoing state of facts you will perceive in how small a degree the requisitions of Congress have been complied with, and may form a judgment of the miserable manner in which the army has been subsisted.

Having lately, at the request of the Board of War, furnished them with my opinion of the quantity of provision, which ought to be laid up at the several posts, they will be able, at the interview which you propose to have with them, to lay before you my ideas upon the subject of a contract for supplying the army. I beg you to be assured, that I never can think your correspondence tedious or troublesome. Duty as well as inclination will always prompts me to listen with pleasure to your observations upon the state of our public affairs; and I shall think myself happy, if I can in any manner contribute to assist you in the arduous task you have undertaken. I shall very anxiously wait for the visit, which you

promise to make me. I am, with very sincere respect and esteem, &c.

P. S. Will it be possible upon a sudden emergency to procure from 2,000 to 2,500 barrels of salt beef or pork at Philadelphia, in such case what may be at Providence or New Hampshire may be disposed of and go towards payment of that in Philadelphia. We have no news of the ship Lafayette ; about 3,000 suits of clothes have arrived at Boston from Spain, but unfortunately the coats are scarlet.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

INSTRUCTIONS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS'S FERRY,
14 July, 1781.

MY LORD,

While I am with the detachment of the army below, you will remain in command here. Your principal attention will be paid to the good order of the camp, and the security of the baggage and stores left in it. There will be no need of advanced pickets, as you will be fully covered in front. The camp guards should be vigilant, and the officers commanding them see that the men are not permitted to straggle, or to plunder the baggage of the officers and soldiers.

The greatest harmony having hitherto subsisted between the French and American soldiers, your Lordship will be particularly careful to see that it is not interrupted by any act of imprudence on our part ; and, as Major-General the Baron Vioménil, who will command the French line, is older in commission than your Lordship, you will take the parole and countersign from him daily. It is scarcely probable that the enemy will make any attempt upon the camp, while so respectable a force is near their own lines. Should they do it, it must be by water. The officer command-

ing the water-guard will communicate any movement to Colonel Grenton at Dobbs's Ferry, who will give immediate intelligence to you, which you will of course transmit to Baron Viomenil. The party at Dobbs's Ferry being for the purpose of erecting a work there, they are not to be withdrawn for camp duties. I am, &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Camp near Dobbs's Ferry, 19 July, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

The moving state wch the army was at the time your letter of the 12th ulto. came to hand, the junction of the allied troops at that period, and a variety of matters which have occurred since that period consequent of this junction, rather than a disinclination to continue a correspondence, the benefits of which were in my favor, must plead as an excuse for my silence till now. Unconscious of having given you just cause to change the favorable sentiments you have expressed for me, I could not suppose you had altered them; and as I never suffer reports unsupported by proofs to have weight in my mind, I know no reason why our correspondence should cease or become less frequent than heretofore, excepting on my part, that as our affairs became more perplexing and embarrassd, the public claimed more of my attention and consequently left me less leisure for private indulgences.

Although our correspondence has been long interrupted, I hope that our [illegible] will be notwithstanding the arts of wicked men, who have [illegible] discord and [illegible] among the friends of America. [illegible] having [illegible] wishes to send you, it was not worth [illegible] attention a moment with them. The contents of this [illegible] will, I am sure, [illegible] because you always approve that seal

That this has been the case in an eminent degree for some time past a Gentleman so well acquainted with public matters as you are, need not be told. The distresses of Virginia I am but too well acquainted with; but the plan you have suggested as a relief for it is, in my judgmt., a greater proof of your unbounded confidence in me, than it is, that the means proposed would be found adequate to the end in view, were it practicable to make the experiment, which at present is not, as there are insuperable obstacles to my removing from the immediate command of the combined troops.

The reasons for this opinion I cannot entrust to paper, at all times liable to miscarriage, and peculiarly so of late. I am fully persuaded, however, (upon good military principles,) that the measures I have adopted will give more effectual and speedier relief to the

which is employed in the public service, and has for its object the public good. . . . It would be a thing for angels to weep over if the goodly fabric of human freedom, which you have so well labored to rear, should in one unlucky moment be levelled with the dust. There is nothing I think more certain, than that your personal call would bring into immediate exertion the force and the resources of this State and the neighboring ones, which, directed as they would be, will effectually disappoint and baffle the deep laid schemes of the enemy." —*Richard Henry Lee to Washington*, Chantilly, June 12th.

In this letter Mr. Lee enclosed a copy of one which he had written to some of the members of Congress, and in which he had expressed himself as follows:

"Let General Washington be immediately sent to Virginia, with two or three thousand good troops. Let Congress, as the head of the federal union, in this crisis direct, that, until a legislature can convene and a governor be appointed, the General be possessed of dictatorial powers, and that it be strongly recommended to the Assembly, when convened, to continue those powers for six, eight, or ten months, as the case may be; and that the General may be desired instantly on his arrival in Virginia to summon the members of both Houses to meet where he shall appoint, to organize and resettle their government."

State of Virginia, than if I was to march thither with dictatorial powers, at the head of every man I could draw from hence, without leaving the important posts on the North River quite defenceless, and these States open to devastation and ruin. When I say this, I would be understood to mean, if I am properly supported (and I have asked no extraordinary succors) by the States Eastward of Jersey inclusive. My present operation, and which I have been preparing for with all the zeal and activity in my power, will, I am morally certain, if I am properly supported, produce one of two things; either the fall of New York, or a withdrawal of the Troops from Viginia excepting a Garrison at Portsmouth, at which place, I have no doubt of the enemy's intention to establish a permanent post. A long land march, in which, we have never failed to dissipate half our men, the difficulty and expense of transportation, and other reasons not less powerful, but wch I dare not commit to writing, decided me in my present plan; and my hopes, I trust, will not be disappointed.

In half an hour's conversation I could, I flatter myself, convince you of the utility of my meases.; but, as I have before observed, I dare not attempt it by letter, because I have already had two or three important ones intercepted in the mails, the sight of which, I am persuaded, occasioned the retrogade movemts. of Lord Cornwallis, and will be the means of bringing part of his force to New York, to the accomplishment of one part of my plan. The fatal policy of short enlistmts. (the primary cause of all our mis-

fortunes—the prolongation of the War—and the source of the immense debt under which we labor—) is now shedding its baneful influence upon our measures and I am laboring under all the disadvantages and evils which result from them and the want of men.—It can be no News to tell you, that by the expiration of the terms of enlistment I was left last Winter with a force so much reduced as to be scarcely able to garrison West point; but, it may be News, and is not less true than surprizing to you to hear that not half the men which were required to be with the Army, as recruits for the Continental Battns., by the first day of Jany. last are yet arrived—and of those asked by me from the Militia not one is come.

But a few words more, and I will put an end to this long letter.

No endeavors of mine have been wanting to obtain a naval superiority in these seas, nor to employ that which we have to valuable purposes. How far I have succeeded in the latter is but too obvious; how far I may see my wishes accomplished in the former, time must discover, With great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

QUESTIONS AND REPLIES.

QUESTIONS BY ROCHAMBEAU.	ANSWERS BY G. W.
The Count de Barras in his Letter of the 13th instant, and	It is next to impossible at this moment, circumstanced as

[1] On the draft of this letter Washington has noted that in the fair copy some sentences were transposed, and alterations and corrections made, but the sentiments were the same.

Mr. De Choisy, in his Letter of the 15th demand both of them, Mr. De Choisy by the desire of the Count de Barras, What is to be the definitive plan of operations that his Excellency General Washington has fixed on that they may make it known to the Count de Grasse, on his arrival in these Seas, and so, enable of him to concur with us. I beg of his Excellency to fix on the answer that I am to send to them and at the same time it will enable me to make beforehand the necessary preparations for the corps of Troops that I command.

Let us suppose that the Count de Grasse does not look on it as practicable to force Sandy hook, and that he does not bring with him any Land troops:

In these two cases which appear very likely, because on one hand, the Seamen look on Sandy hook bar, as impossible to force, and on the other hand because the Court of France makes no mention of any troops to be brought here by the Count de Grasse, in the Letters that inform us of his arrival here—in these two cases, Does his Ex- we are & laboring under uncertainties, to fix a definitive plan for the Campaign—definitive measures must depend upon circumstances at the Time of the Arrival of the Count de Grasse, — particularly on the following—

1st. The situation of the Enemy at that moment.

2d. On the succors he shall bring with him — or on the Force we shall have collected by that Period.

3d. On the Operation & Advantages wch. may be gained by the Fleet in the moment of its Arrival.

and 4th. On the Continuance of the Fleet upon & probability of its maintaing. its decisive Superiority whilst it is here.

If the Fleet of Count de Grasse should be late in it arriving to this Coast—if the Count should not think it prudent to attempt forcing the Passage of the Hook—or fail in making the Attempt—if he should bring no land Troops with him, & the American Force should not be considerably augmented — I am of Opinion, that under these Circumstances we ought to throw a sufficient Garrison into W. Point, leave some Continental Troops & Militia to cover the

cellency think that with an Army which, joined to the French corps, will not be much more numerous than the Troops that defend New York, it will be possible to undertake with success something against that place.

If his Excellency does not look on it as practicable to risk it, could not the operations be directed against Virginia, Mr. de Grasse be sent to Chesapeak bay and bring there the detachment of Mr. De Choisy, and a part of his Excellency's army or the French corps march as far as Elk river, where the Count de Grasse being master in Chesapeak bay would come to convoy him? Would not we be then in a condition to undertake with Success on Lord Cornwallis and force him to evacuate Virginia. That march of the French troops would need to be prepared before-Country contiguous to N. York, & transport the Remainder (both French & American) to Virginia, should the Enemy still keep a Force there. The Season & other Circumstances will admit of late Operations in that Quarter. To be prepared for such an Event, I think it highly expedient that Mr. Barras should hold all his Transports in the utmost Readiness to take the Detachment under Mr. De Choisy & the heavy Artillery at Providence on Board, & sail with them to meet the Troops either in Delaware or Chesapeake, as may be ultimately agreed upon.

But should the Fleet arrive in Season—not be limited to a short stay & should it be able to force the Harbor of N. York, & in addition to all these, should find the British Force in a divided State,—I am of Opinion that the Enterprise against N. York & its Dependencies shou'd be our primary object.

To prevent the Enemy from a possibility of formg. a Junction & to lay a Foundation for their Ruin, I was anxious that Count de Barras, if he tho't the Departure of the Royal Oak had given him naval superiority, should sail for Chesapeak, an Event *if the Superiority is on*

hand. It would be necessary that Count de Barras carry wtth him our Siege Artillery, and bring with him all the Transports necessary to the passage of the French corps in the Bay of Chesapeak.

LE CT. DE ROCHAMBEAU.

his Side, I devoutly wish as I am of Opinion that much Good & no Evil can result from it.— The Reasons which induce the Count to decline that Measure, have been communicated by him to your Excellency & to me by Letter.

Upon the whole I do not see what more can be done than to prosecute the Plan agreed to at Weathersfield — & to recommend it to the Count de Grasse to come immediately to Sandy Hook & if possible possess the Harbor of N. York at the Moment of his Arrival and then form a full View & Consideration of the Circumstances which exist form a definitive plan of Campaign upon the surest grounds.

Go. W.

Camp at Dobbs' Ferry,
July 19, 1781.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WATERBURY.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 21 July, 1781.

SIR,

The army will make a movement this evening. You will march your corps on the same route, and in such time and manner as to be at East Chester between daybreak and sunrise, as directed in my letter of the 14th. Your troops should be supplied, (if possible,) with three days' cooked provisions; and the

movement of the army, as well as of your troops, must be kept a secret until the moment you march.[1]

In order to prevent the enemy from obtaining any intelligence whatever from us, I have ordered small parties to waylay all the roads from the North River to East Chester. I must request you will send an active subaltern and twenty men with good guides early this afternoon across the fields and woods from

[1] With a view of ascertaining the exact position of the enemy on the north end of New York Island, General Washington resolved to reconnoitre their posts from the western shore of the Hudson. For this purpose, on the 18th of July, he crossed the river at Dobbs Ferry, accompanied by Count de Rochambeau, General de Beville, and General Duportail. They were attended by an escort of one hundred and fifty men from the Jersey troops, then stationed on the west side of the river. The day was spent in reconnoitring from the high grounds between Dobbs Ferry and Fort Lee. He dined at one William Day's, near Fort Lee. The subsequent manœuvres near Kingsbridge are briefly sketched in the following extract from his *Diary*.

"*July 21st.*—I ordered about five thousand men to be ready to march at eight o'clock, for the purpose of reconnoitring the enemy's posts at Kingsbridge, and of cutting off, if possible, such of Delancey's corps as should be found without their lines. At the hour appointed the march commenced, in four columns, on different roads. Major-General Parsons with the Connecticut troops, and twenty-five of Sheldon's horse, formed the right column, with two field-pieces, on the North River road. The other two divisions, under Major-Generals Lincoln and Howe, together with the corps of sappers and miners, and four field-pieces, formed the next column on the Saw-mill River road. The right column of the French, on our left, consisted of the brigade of Bourbonnois, with the battalion of grenadiers and chasseurs, two field-pieces, and two twelve-pounders. Their left column was composed of the legion of Lauzun, one battalion of grenadiers and chasseurs, the regiment of Soissonnois, two field-pieces, and two howitzers. General Waterbury, with the militia and State troops of Connecticut, was to march on the East Chester road, and to be joined at that place by the cavalry of Sheldon, for the purpose of scouring Frog's Neck. Sheldon's infantry was to join the legion of Lauzun and scour Morrisania, and to be covered by Scammell's light infantry, who were to advance through the fields, waylay the roads, stop all communication, and prevent intelligence from getting to the enemy. At Valentine's Hill the left column of the American troops and right of the French formed their junction, as did the left of the

your encampment to some good position for an ambuscade, on the side of the road leading from New Rochelle to East Chester, as near the latter as may be without hazard of discovery. This party must remain perfectly concealed, with orders to apprehend all persons going towards Kingsbridge. It is essential that your party should not be seen by any inhabitant, as this might frustrate the very object of our precautions. You will be convinced, Sir, by

French also, by *mistake*, as it was intended it should cross the Brunx by Garrineau's and recross it at Williams's Bridge. The whole army (Parsons's division first) arrived at Kingsbridge about daylight, and formed on the heights back of Fort Independence, extending towards Delancey's Mills; while the legion of Lauzun and Waterbury's corps proceeded to scour Morrisania and Frog's Neck to little effect, as most of the Refugees had fled, and hid themselves in such obscure places as not to be discovered; and by stealth got over to the islands adjacent, and to the enemy's shipping, which lay in the East River. A few, however, were caught, and some cattle and horses brought off.

"*July 22d.*—The enemy did not appear to have had the least intelligence of our movement, or to know we were upon the heights opposite to them, till the whole army was ready to display itself. After having fixed upon the ground, and formed our line, I began with General Rochambeau and the engineers to reconnoitre the enemy's position and works; and first from Tippet's Hill opposite to their left. From thence it was evident, that the small redoubt (Fort Charles) near Kingsbridge would be absolutely at the command of a battery, which might be erected thereon. It also appeared equally evident, that the fort on Cox's Hill was in bad repair, and little dependence placed in it. There is neither ditch nor friezing, and the northeast corner appears quite easy of access, occasioned as it would seem by a rock. The approach from the inner point is secured by a ledge of rocks, which would conceal a party from observation, till it got within about one hundred yards of the fort, around which, for that or a greater distance, the ground has little covering of bushes upon it. There is a house on this side under Tippet's Hill, but out of view, I conceive, of the crossing-place most favorable to a partisan stroke. From this view, and every other I could get of Forts Tryon, Knyphausen, and Laurel Hill, the works are formidable. There are no barracks or huts on the east side of the hill, on which Forts Tryon and Knyphausen stand, nor are there any on the hill opposite, except those by Fort George. Near the Blue Bell there is a number of houses, but they have more the appearance of stables than barracks. In the hollow, near the barrier gate, are about fourteen or fifteen tents, which

your own experience and good sense, that the profoundest secrecy is absolutely necessary in all military matters, and in no instance more indispensably so, than in movements towards the enemy's lines. I am, &c.

P. S. After you have given all the necessary orders, I could wish you would come to head-quarters and dine with me, as I may have many things to communicate personally to you.

are the only encampment I could see without the line of palisades. A continued hill from the creek, east of Haerlem River and a little below Morris's White House, has from every part of it the command of the opposite shore, and all the plain adjoining is within range of shot from batteries, which may be erected thereon. The general width of the river, along this range of hills, appears to be from one hundred to two hundred yards. The opposite shore, though more or less marshy, does not seem miry, and the banks are very easy of access. How far the battery, under cover of the blockhouse on the hill northwest of Haerlem town, is capable of scouring the plain, is difficult to determine from this side ; but it would seem as if the distance were too great to be within the range of its shot on that part of the plain nearest the creek before mentioned, and which is also nearest the heights back of our old lines thrown up in the year 1776. It unfortunately happens, that, in the rear of the continued hill before mentioned, there is a deep swamp, and the grounds west of that swamp are not so high as the heights near Haerlem River. In the rear of this again is the Brunx, which is not to be crossed without boats below Delancey's Mills.

"*July 23d.*—Went upon Frog's Neck to see what communication could be had with Long Island, and the engineers attended with instruments to measure the distance across. Having finished the reconnoitre without damage, a few harmless shot only being fired at us, we marched back about six o'clock by the same routes we went down, but in a reversed order of march, and arrived at camp about midnight."

Supposing it probable, that Count de Grasse would shortly appear off Sandy Hook with this fleet, General Washington wrote to him, on the 21st of July, in Count de Rochambeau's cipher, acquainting him with the junction of the allied armies, their position and strength, and the force of the enemy ; and also explained the plans then in view as to future operations. This letter was sent under cover to Col. Jonathan Forman, at Monmouth, with a request that he would keep look-outs on the heights, and, as soon as the fleet should approach, go on board the fleet in person and deliver the letter to Count de Grasse.

TO THOMAS McKEAN, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.[1]

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS'S FERRY,
21 July, 1781.

SIR,

I have been honored by your Excellency's three letters of the 14th and 17th of this month, with the several resolutions of Congress, and the extracts from intercepted letters enclosed. I am much obliged by your attention in the communication of the extracts, although I had been favored with them through another channel, previous to the receipt of your favors. The intelligence to be collected from them, if properly improved, I think may turn greatly to our advantage.[2]

I take this opportunity most sincerely to congratulate you, Sir, on the honor conferred upon you by Congress, in being elected to preside in that most respectable body. Happy, as I expect to be in your correspondence, I dare say I shall have no reason to complain of the mode of your conducting it, as from a knowledge of your character I flatter myself it will ever be performed with great propriety. I take the liberty, however, to request as a particular favor, that you will be so good as to convey to me, as you have opportunity, any interesting intelligence, which you may receive either from Europe, or respecting our Continental affairs. Your situation will put it particularly in your power to oblige me in this request,

[1] Chosen President of Congress on the 10th of July, as successor to Mr. Huntington, who had resigned. Samuel Johnson, of North Carolina, was first chosen, but he declined accepting the appointment.

[2] Extracts from intercepted letters.

and be assured, Sir, that a greater obligation cannot be conferred; since, for want of communication in this way, I have often been left in the dark in matters, which essentially concern the public welfare, and which, if known, might be very influential in the government of my conduct in the military line.

I am very happy to be informed, by accounts from all parts of the continent, of the agreeable prospect of a very plentiful supply of almost all the productions of the earth. Blessed as we are with the bounties of Providence, necessary for our support and defence, the fault must surely be our own, (and great indeed will it be,) if we do not by a proper use of them obtain the noble prize for which we have been so long contending, the establishment of peace, liberty and independence. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN PARKE CUSTIS.

DOBBS'S FERRY, July 25, 1781.

DEAR CUSTIS,

Your letter of the 11th covering certain proposals which were made by you to Mr. Robt. Alexander came safe by the last Post. I read the letter with attention, and think they are founded on principles of liberality and Justice as far as I can form a judgment without seeing the mortgage, or having recourse to the original agreement, and the missives which may have passed between you.

How far the purchase on your part, and the sale on Alexander's, was a matter of speculation at the

time of bargaining, you yourselves and the nature of the agreement can alone determine. If, from the tenor of your contract, you were to pay paper money —if this paper money was at that time in a depreciated state, and the difference between it and specie fixed and known,—and if, moreover, Alexander, like many others, entertained an opinion that it would again appreciate, and a paper dollar become equal in value to a silver one—it might be more just than generous, (as the money is, in fact, worth little or nothing now) to let him abide the consequences of his opinion by paying him in depreciated paper; because the presumption is that he would have made no allowance for appreciation, tho' the former should be of equal value with the latter, pound for pound. But this, as I have before observed, depends upon the nature of the bargain, and the light in which the matter was understood at the time it was made by both parties.

If the bargain was unaccompanied by particular circumstances, had no explanatory meaning, but simply imported that so much money was to be given for so much land, to be paid on or before a certain period, it is certainly optional in you to discharge it at any time you please short of that period. But I conceive that this can only be done by an actual tender of the money, and that there is no legal obligatn. or tye upon Alexr. to take your bond (with any security whatever) but the fear of losing the original debt, or the Interest of it, by refusing the tender you propose to make him of £48,000 at this time; because I hold

it as a maxim that no man can be compelled to change the nature of his debt, or alter the security of it, without his own consent.

I have before said, that, for want of the mortgage, and a knowledge of all the circumstances attending your bargain, it is impossible for me to give a decided opinion. Your proposals appear to be fair and equitable; but what views Alexander may have had, and how far he is prepared to support himself in those views, by written or other valid proof, I am unable to say. As an honest man, he ought to be content with justice, and justice I think you have offered him.

You may recollect that I disliked the terms of your bargain when they were 1st communicated to me, and wished then that you might not find them perplexing and disadvantageous in the end; as I now do, that you may settle the matter with honor and satisfaction to yourself.

It gave me pain to hear that you had been so much afflicted with sickness among your People, and that you thought your son in danger. It would give me equal pleasure to learn that he and the rest of your family were restored to perfect health. That so few of our countrymen have joined the enemy is a circumstance as pleasing to me as it must be mortifyingly convincing to them of the fallacy of their assertion, that $\frac{2}{3}$ of the people were in their Intert. and ready to join them when opportunity offered. Had this been the case, the marquis's force, and the other $\frac{1}{3}$, must have abandoned the country.

I am much pleased with your choice of a governor.

He is an honest man—active, spirited, and decided, and will, I am persuaded, suit the times as well as any person in the State.[1] You were lucky, considering the route by which the enemy retreated to Williamsburg, to sustain so little damage. I am of opinion that Lord Cornwallis will establish a strong post at Portsmouth, detach part of his force to New York, and go with the residue to So. Carolina.

I returned yesterday from reconnoitring (with Count de Rochambeau and the engineers of both armies) the enemy's works near Kingsbridge; we lay close by them two days and a night, without any attempt on their part to prevent it. They kept up a random cannonade, but to very little effect. I am waiting impatiently for the men the States (this way) have been called upon for, that I may determine my plan and commence my operations.

My best wishes attend Nelly Custis (who I hope is perfectly recovered) and the little girls. My complimts. await inquiring friends, and I am,

Sincerely and affectionately, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS'S FERRY,
30 July, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

With peculiar satisfaction I do myself the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your several favors, of the 10th, 14th and 16th of May last, with that of the 22d

[1] Thomas Nelson.

June, and to assure you at the same time, that it is with the warmest pleasure I express my full approbatinn of the various movements and operations, which your military conduct has lately exhibited; while I confess to you that I am unable to conceive what more could have been done under your circumstances, than has been displayed by your little persevering and determined army. Lord Rawdon's reinforcement from England was a most untoward circumstance; but even this, I hope, will soon be surmounted by your good fortune.

You will be informed from the Marquis, of every circumstance that has taken place in Virginia. A detachment from the army of this brave and fortunate young nobleman will, I hope, soon arrive to your assistance in Carolina.

By our movements in this quarter, and the main army taking a position near to New York, and making every preparation for a serious attempt upon that place, we have already produced a happy effect, that of a withdraw of considerable part of the troops under the command of Lord Cornwallis as a reinforcement to their garrison, which has been some time past closely confined to York Island. This withdraw will probably disappoint their views of conquest in Virginia, and will exceedingly embarrass the prospects of the British ministry in the proposed treaty opened at Vienna.[1] This is a very great object, even

[1] Conditional instructions had been sent from Sir Henry Clinton to Lord Cornwallis, that the latter should despatch to New York a detachment from his army, as soon as he should have established himself in a fortified post near the

should any thing prevent our obtaining further success in our operations against New York.

The operating force of the enemy in the southern States being confined in all probability to South Carolina, will leave the other States in a condition to afford you such succors as, with the aid of the Marquis's detachment, will, I hope, enable you to fulfil your hopes and wishes in their utmost extent in your command. Should this event take place, you may be assured, that, added to the consideration of the public good which will result therefrom, honor that will be thereby reflected on your own person, will afford me the highest satisfaction. I sincerely wish we had the means of communicating more frequently with each other than has been lately experienced. Be assured, Sir, my concern for your honor and welfare interests me most particularly in every event which attends you.

A particular reason, which cannot at this time be communicated, induces me to request that you will be pleased to give me the earliest and most minute information of every event, that takes place with you, and a circumstantial detail of the present situation of the State of South Carolina, its strength and operative force, with its resources for the support of an army, and the extent of those resources, with the places where they may be collected and secured ; also

Chesapeake. Their departure was delayed, however, till the French fleet arrived in the Chesapeake, and in reality no part of Lord Cornwallis's army left Virginia for the purpose of reinforcing Sir Henry Clinton.—See the correspondence in *Lord Cornwallis's Answer to Sir Henry Clinton's "Narrative," &c.*, pp. 79–188.

the strength, position, and circumstances attending the enemy's force. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS FERRY,
30 July, 1781.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,

I take your private letter of the 20th of this month in the light which you wish it, that of an unreserved communication from one friend to another; and I should be wanting in candor, were I not to expose my sentiments to you in as free a manner. I am convinced, that your desire to be with this army arises principally from a wish to be actively useful. You will not, therefore, regret your stay in Virginia until matters are reduced to a greater degree of certainty, than they are at present, especially when I tell you, that, from the change of circumstances with which the removal of part of the enemy's force from Virginia to New York will be attended, it is more than probable, that we shall also entirely change our plan of operations. I think we have already effected one part of the plan of the campaign settled at Weathersfield; that is, giving a substantial relief to the southern States, by obliging the enemy to recall a considerable part of their force from thence. Our

[1] *From the Orderly Book*, July 31st.—"The light companies of the first and second regiments of New York (upon their arrival in camp), with the two companies of York levies under the command of Captains Sackett and Williams, will form a battalion under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton and Major Fish. After the formation of the battalion, Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton will join the advanced corps under the orders of Colonel Scammell."

views must now be turned towards endeavoring to expel them totally from those States, if we find ourselves incompetent to the siege of New York. The difficulty of doing this does not so much depend upon obtaining a force capable of effecting it, as upon the mode of collecting that force to the proper point, and transporting the provisions, stores, &c., necessary for such an operation. You are fully acquainted with the almost impracticability of doing this by land; to say nothing of the amazing loss of men always occasioned by long marches, and those towards a quarter in which the service is disagreeable. I should not, however, hesitate to encounter these difficulties, great as they are, had we not prospects of transporting ourselves in a manner safe, easy, and expeditious. Your penetration will point out my meaning, which I cannot venture to express in direct terms.[1]

I approve of your resolution to reinforce General Greene, in proportion to the detachment which the enemy may make to New York. Let your next attention be paid to training and forming the militia, with which you may be furnished, and disposing of them in such a manner, that they may be drawn at the shortest notice to whatever point the enemy make their capital post, and which I conclude will be at Portsmouth. The establishment of magazines at safe deposits will be in all cases necessary; but, above all things, I recommend an augmentation of your cavalry to as great a height as possible. It may happen, that the enemy may be driven to the necessity of forcing

[1] Alluding to the expected arrival of Count de Grasse with a French fleet.

their way through North Carolina to avoid a greater misfortune. A superiority of horse on our side would be fatal to them in such a case.

The advantages resulting from a move of the French fleet from Newport to Chesapeake were early and strongly pointed out to Count de Barras, and I thought he had once agreed to put it into execution; but, by his late letters, he seemed to think that such a manœuvre might interfere with greater plans, and therefore he declined it. It would now be too late to answer the principal object, as, by accounts from a deserter, the troops arrived from Virginia last Friday.[1]

Should your return to this army be finally determined, I cannot flatter you with a command equal to

[1] "I have no doubt but the reasons which induce you to decline the removal of the squadron under your command to the Chesapeake at this time are founded in propriety; but I am certain, that, could the measure have taken place, it would have been attended with most valuable consequences, more especially as, from reports and appearances, the enemy are about to bring part of their troops from Virginia to New York. Although the detachments from your fleet under the command of the Baron d'Angely did not succeed at Huntington, we are not the less obliged to your Excellency for directing the attempt to be made. If that post is maintained, I think an opportunity of striking it to advantage may still be found, and I doubt not but you will readily embrace it." —*Washington to Count de Barras*, 21 July, 1781.

The reason assigned by M. de Barras for remaining at Newport was, that he thought it imprudent to risk any new enterprise, which might contravene the general plan of operations, and retard his junction with Count de Grasse. A few days afterwards (July 30), General Washington wrote in his *Diary*, that Count de Barras had expressed himself in still stronger terms against a removal from Newport. "This induced me," said he, "to desist from further representing the advantages, which would result from preventing a junction of the enemy's force at New York, and blocking up those now in Virginia; lest in the attempt any disaster should happen, and the loss of or damage to his fleet should be ascribed to my obstinacy in urging a measure, to which his own judgment was opposed, and the execution of which might impede his junction with the West India fleet, and thwart the views of the Count de Grasse upon this coast."

your expectations or my wishes. You know the over proportion of general officers to our numbers, and can therefore conceive where the difficulty will lie. General McDougall is not yet provided for, and the Jersey and York troops are reserved for him. They are promised to him, though they have not yet joined.

In my letter to General Greene, which I beg the favor of you to forward, I have hinted nothing of what I have said to you, for fear of a miscarriage. You will probably find a safe opportunity from your army to him, and you will oblige me by communicating the part of this letter, which relates to my expectation of being able to transport part of the army to the southward, should the operation against New York be declined.

I wish, as I mentioned in my last, to send a confidential person to you to explain at large what I have so distantly hinted; but I am really at a loss, for want of knowing the officers better, to find one upon whose discretion I can depend. My own family, you know, are constantly and fully employed. I however hope, that I have spoken plain enough to be understood by you. With every sentiment of affection and regard, I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS FERRY,
2 August, 1781.

SIR,

Congress will readily conceive the disagreeable situation in which I find myself, when they are informed, that I am not stronger at this advanced period of the

Campaign than when the Army first moved out of their Winter Quarters. Justice to my own feelings and Character requires that I should lay before that Honorable Body a summary of the measures I have taken to obtain reinforcements, and inform them, likewise, of the little success with which my requisitions have hitherto been attended.

I shall not go back to the date of the Requisition of October last to the several States, which was made in consequence of the new regulation of the Army, and went to the number of men called for by that arrangement. It will be sufficient to say, that the Recruits sent in were comparatively small in proportion to the deficiencies, as may be seen from the Returns which I have from time to time transmitted to Congress.

I will begin with the transactions subsequent to the Conference I had with Count de Rochambeau at Weathersfield in May, when a plan of operations was concerted, and the inclosure No. 1 written to the States of New Hampshire—Massachusetts Bay—Rhode Island and Connecticut. Letters similar to the foregoing were written, upon my return to New Windsor, to the other States as far as Pennsylvania inclusive, from which last, 1600 Militia were required. But it having been found that that State had been called upon by Congress to send 2400 Militia to Virginia, I withdrew my request, and apportioned the number asked of them to the other States—requiring only a Corps of 300 Riflemen from Pennsylvania.

Being very desirous of getting my force (especially the Continental Troops) together as soon as possible,

or in other words, by the time I could prepare Boats, collect Stores, &c., I wrote the letter No. 2 to the States of New Jersey—Connecticut—Massachusetts and New Hampshire, with this variation in respect to Connecticut; that I desired 800 of her Militia might be sent without loss of time to Westpoint, that I might be thereby enabled to withdraw part of the Continental Garrison from that post for Field Service—and as I found that I should be under the absolute necessity of calling down Hazen's and the two Continental Battalions of New York, which had been sent up for the security of the Northern Frontier, I, upon the 25th of June, wrote to His Excellency Govr. Hancock, and to the officers Commanding the Militia in the Western parts of Massachusetts, and requested that 600 (part of the quota asked for) might be marched without loss of time to Albany to replace the Continental Troops drawn from that Quarter. Notwithstanding this, by my last letters from Brigr. Genl. Clinton dated at Albany the 20th ulto. not a single Man had come in from Massachusetts, and by a Return from General McDougall commanding at Westpoint, only 176 from Connecticut had arrived at that post yesterday. In short, not a single Militia man from any State has joined the Army, except the few just mentioned—about 80 Line of New York and about 206 State Troops of Connecticut, both of which were upon the Line previous to my leaving our Winter Cantonment.

The inclosure No. 3 exhibits a Return of all the Recruits which have joined the Continental Battalions

in this Army since the rearrangement of them. The numbers which have joined in the course of last month are particularly designated.

The General Return for June, which I have lately sent by Capt. Roberts to the Board of War, furnishes a state of the Army up to the 1st of July. To this is to be added the Recruits which have joined since—and a deduction is to be made for the Casualties of July.

For the better understanding the General Return, it may not be amiss to remark, that the Light Infantry with the Marquis de la Fayette are included in the Column "upon Command." As are the Boatmen—Waggoners—extra Artificers—small detached Guards for various purposes—Waiters and Laborers in the Quarter Master's and Commissary's departments, in the same Column, and that designated on "extra service." All which being deducted from the total exhibits an Army upon paper, rather than an operating Force.

I have in vain endeavored to remedy this Monstrous deduction: But the Civil departments having been totally destitute of Money, have been unable to hire or pay the Men necessary for their uses, and I have therefore been obliged to spare them from the Line to prevent a total stagnation of business.

While I think it my duty faithfully to draw this picture, disagreeable as it is, both for the full information of Congress and my own justification, it becomes incumbent upon me to add, that I shall exert my utmost abilities so to improve the means with which I may be furnished, that the present Campaign,

if not decisive, may be, not inglorious, but in some degree advantageous to America.

I have again written in the most pressing manner to the States as your Excellency will find by the inclosure No. 4, of equal date with this. I flatter myself it will have some avail, but I am at all events happy in thinking, that one of the ends proposed by the plan of operations concerted at Weathersfield will take effect —that of obliging the enemy to recall a considerable force from the Southward to support New York.

It is with pleasure I assure your Excellency that, by great exertions and powerful aids from the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, the heavy Artillery—Stores, &c., many of which were also lent by those States, have come on to the North River in a manner beyond my expectation. Those from Pennsylvania are halted at Philadelphia till my prospects of obtaining Men are more encouraging. I thought it best to do this, that I might not to have to transport them back again, or be encumbered with them here, should we not be able to prosecute offensive operations.

I have also the pleasure to inform you, that vigorous exertions are making by the four New England States to furnish a competent supply of Beef Cattle. I have, &c.

P. S. I informed your Excellency in my last, that by the account of a Deserter, part of the Troops had arrived at New York from Virginia. This is contradicted by others who have come out since, who say that troops are expected from that quarter.[1]

[1] Read in Congress August 6th.—Referred to Bland, Boudinot, and Varnum.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO STATES.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEAR DOBBS' FERRY,
2 August, 1781.

SIR,—

I regret being obliged to inform you, that I find myself, at this late period, very little stronger than I was when the army first moved out of their quarters. Of the militia, which were required of the State of New Hampshire, and which were to have joined me by the 14th of last month, none have come in, and of the levies for the continental battalions, only thirteen in the course of the last month. The reinforcements from the other States have been very inconsiderable.

I leave you to judge of the delicate and embarrassed situation in which I stand at this moment. Unable to advance, with prudence, beyond my present position, while, perhaps, in the general opinion, my force is equal to the commencement of operations against New York, my conduct must appear, if not blameable, highly mysterious, at least. Our allies, with whom a junction has been formed upwards of three weeks, and who were made to expect, from the engagements which I entered into with them at Weathersfield in May last, a very considerable augmentation of our force by this time, instead of seeing a prospect of advancing, must conjecture, upon good grounds, that the campaign will waste fruitlessly away. I shall just remark, that it will be no small degree of triumph to our enemies, and will have a very pernicious influence upon our friends in Europe, should they find such a failure of resource ; or such a want of energy to draw it out, that our boasted and expensive operations end only in idle parade.

I cannot yet but persuade myself, and I do not discontinue to encourage our allies with a hope that our force will still be sufficient to carry our intended operation into effect, or if we cannot fully accomplish that, to oblige the enemy to withdraw part of their force from the southward to support New York, and which, as I informed you in my letter from Weathersfield, was part of our plan.

You must be sensible, Sir, that the fulfilment of my engage-

ments must depend upon the degree of vigor with which the executives of the several States exercise the powers with which they have been vested, and enforce the laws lately passed for filling up, and supplying the army. In full confidence that the means which have been voted will he obtained, I shall continue my preparations: but I must take the liberty of informing you that it is essentially necessary I should be made acquainted immediately on the receipt of this, of the number of continental levies and militia which have been forwarded and what are the prospects of obtaining the remainder.

I will further add, that it will be equally necessary to see that the monthly quota of provisions stipulated at the meeting of the commissioners at Providence is regularly complied with. I am, &c.

TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, DOBBS'S FERRY,
2 August, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

* * * * * *

The expectation of the pleasure of seeing you has prevented me hitherto from making a communication of a most important and interesting nature. But circumstances will not admit of further delay, and I must trust it to paper. It seems reduced almost to a certainty, that the enemy will reinforce New York with part of their troops from Virginia. In that case, the attempt against the former must be laid aside, as it will not be in our power to draw together a force sufficient to justify the undertaking. The detachment, which the enemy will probably leave in Virginia, seems the next object which ought to engage our attention, and which will be a very practicable one,

should we obtain a naval superiority, of which I am not without hopes, and be able to carry a body of men suddenly round by water. The principal difficulty, which occurs, is obtaining transports at the moment they may be wanted; for, if they are taken up beforehand, the use for which they are designed cannot be concealed, and the enemy will make arrangements to defeat the plan.

What I would therefore wish you to inform yourself of, without making a direct inquiry, is what number of tons of shipping could be obtained in Philadelphia at any time between this and the 20th of this month, and whether there could also be obtained at the same time a few deep-waisted sloops and schooners proper to carry horses. The number of double-decked vessels, which may be wanted, of two hundred tons and upwards, will not exceed thirty. I shall be glad of your answer as soon as possible, because, if it is favorable, I can direct certain preparations to be made in Philadelphia and at other convenient places, without incurring any suspicions. There certainly can be no danger of not obtaining flour in Philadelphia; and as you seem to have doubts of procuring salt meat there, I shall direct all that which is at the eastward to be collected at places from whence it may be shipped upon the shortest notice. You will also oblige me by giving me your opinion of the number of vessels, which might be obtained at Baltimore, or other places in Chesapeake, in the time before mentioned or thereabouts.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, DOBBS'S FERRY,
8 August, 1781.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to inform Congress, through your Excellency, that, at a late meeting between the American and British commissaries of prisoners, it has been proposed by the latter to go into a full exchange of Lieutenant-General Burgoyne and all the remaining officers of convention (by composition where ranks will not apply) for the remainder of our officers in this quarter, and after them for those taken at the southward. One of the terms insisted upon is, that the prisoners surrendered by the capitulation of the Cedars, to the amount of four hundred and forty-three, shall be allowed.

I have not thought myself at liberty to accept of these proposals without the concurrence of Congress, for the following reasons; that I imagine our minister at the court of Versailles has been already directed to propose the exchange of Lieutenant-General Burgoyne for the Honorable Mr. Laurens[1]; that I do not know whether it would be agreeable to Congress to release the whole of the convention officers, before they have obtained a settlement for the subsistence of those troops; and lastly because the refusal of the ratification of the convention of the Cedars has never been repealed.

I would beg leave to remark on the two last, that the exchange of our full colonels can never be ob-

[1] An interesting note on this matter may be found in *Franklin's Works* (Bigelow's edition), vii., 303.

tained but by composition, and that it is better to effect this by a composition for inferior officers than for men, because the enemy gain no reinforcement by such mode. To relieve the full colonels in this quarter only, & who, all but one, have been prisoners since 1777, would take seven hundred privates. Should the security for the convention debt still be urged, I would answer, that we may perhaps deceive ourselves in supposing that the balance upon a general settlement, for the subsistence of all prisoners since the commencement of the war, will be much in our favor. I am inclined to think we shall find it the contrary, and owing to this, the British have constantly kept their accounts with accuracy, and have vouchers ready to support them. We, on the other hand, shall be found very deficient on that score; indeed, I fear almost totally so, except in the instance of the convention troops and prisoners of war latterly.

Congress will judge of the expediency of repealing their act respecting the convention of the Cedars upon the present occasion. Mr. Skinner, the commissary-general of prisoners, will have the honor of delivering this to your Excellency. I shall be obliged by an answer to several points contained in it, at his return, that I may instruct him accordingly.

I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress August 17th. Referred to Boudinot, Varnum, and Sherman. "You are to insist upon the release of inhabitants taken out of arms, without any compensation. You may inform Mr. Loring, that I would not wish to be obliged to seize private persons to obtain the relief of those who are now in New York. I have it at this time in my power to secure every loyalist in the western part of Connecticut, in the county of Westchester, and in great part

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

[illegible]

[illegible]

My Dear Marquis,

I have received your letters of the 9th and 30th ultimo, and 1st instant. I cannot learn that any troops have yet arrived at New York from Virginia. A fleet of twenty sail came in last Saturday with troops, but they are said to be Hessian recruits from Europe. The Concorde frigate has arrived at Newport from Count de Grasse. He was to leave St. Domingo the 3d of this month with a fleet of between twenty-five and twenty-nine sail of the line, and a considerable body of land forces. His destination is immediately for the Chesapeake: so that he will either be there by the time this reaches you,

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at Yorktown; nor I have not encouraged a practice, which I have reprobated in the enemy, and which nothing shall induce me to put in execution, but seeing no other mode of procuring the release of our citizens."—Washington to Skinner, 7 August 1781.

On receiving General Washington's letter, Congress resolved, that he should be authorized to go into a full exchange of General Burgoyne and all the remaining officers of the convention of Saratoga: and, also, that the prisoners taken at the Cedars should be considered as subjects of exchange, on condition that assurance be made for several Canadian officers taken by the Americans at St. John's and Chamblee, and sent into the British lines on parole in 1776, concerning whose exchange there had been a dispute.—Journals, August 21st.

"I am clearly in sentiment with you, that all emissions of paper money ought to be subject to a supreme direction to give it a proper stamina, and universal credit; and that *good* and sure funds should be appropriated for the redemption of it—but in this, as in most other matters, the States, individually, have acted so independently of each other, as to become so much a rope of sand as to totter upon the brink of ruin, when the Independency of them, by the resources which have been actually drawn from them had been applied to great objects by one common head, would have been as unshaken as Mount Atlas and as regardless of Britain's efforts do destroy it, as *she* is of the tempests that pass over her."—*Washington to William Fitzhugh*, 8 August, 1781.

or you may look for him every moment. Under these circumstances, whether the enemy remain in full force, or whether they have only a detachment left, you will immediately take such a position as will best enable you to prevent their sudden retreat through North Carolina, which I presume they will attempt the instant they perceive so formidable an armament. Should General Wayne, with the troops destined for South Carolina, still remain in the neighborhood of James River, and the enemy should have made no detachment to the southward, you will detain those troops until you hear from me again, and inform General Greene of the cause of their delay. If Wayne should have marched, and should have gained any considerable distance, I would not have him halted.

You shall hear further from me as soon as I have concerted plans and formed dispositions for sending a reinforcement from hence. In the mean time, I have only to recommend a continuation of that prudence and good conduct, which you have manifested through the whole of your campaign. You will be particularly careful to conceal the expected arrival of the Count; because, if the enemy are not apprized of it, they will stay on board their transports in the Bay, which will be the luckiest circumstance in the world. You will take measures for opening a communication with Count de Grasse the moment he arrives, and will concert measures with him for making the best uses of your joint forces until you receive aid from this quarter.

P. S. I would not wish you to call out a large body of militia upon this occasion, but rather keep those you have compact and ready for service. I am, &c.[1]

TO THE COUNT DE GRASSE.[2]

CAMP, AT PHILLIPSBURG, 17 August, 1781.

SIR,

In consequence of the despatches received from your Excellency by the frigate La Concorde, it has been judged expedient to give up for the present the

[1] "A correspondent of mine, a servant to Lord Cornwallis, writes on the 26th of July at Portsmouth, and says his master, Tarleton, and Simcoe are still in town, but expect to move. The greater part of the army is embarked. There are in Hampton Road one fifty-gun ship, two thirty-six gun frigates, and eighteen sloops loaded with horses. There remain but nine vessels in Portsmouth, which appear to be getting ready. My Lord's baggage is yet in town. His Lordship is so shy of his papers, that my honest friend says he cannot get at them. There is a large quantity of negroes, very valuable indeed, but no vessel it seems to take them off. What garrison they have, I do not know. I shall take care, at least, to keep them within bounds. General Muhlenberg, with a corps of light infantry and horse, is moving towards Portsmouth; but, although I do not think they are going up the river or the bay, the less so as they have made a parade of taking pilots on board, I had rather act on the cautious side, and by keeping a supporting position leave no chance to his Lordship to out-manœuvre us. Should a French fleet now come into Hampton Road, the British army would, I think, be ours.

"I am going to send a flag to Lord Cornwallis. I owe him the justice to say, that his conduct to me has been peculiarly polite; and many differences between commissaries have been very graciously adjusted by him to my satisfaction."—*Lafayette to Washington*, Malvern Hill, July 31st.

Cornwallis took possession of York and Gloucester on the 1st and 2d of August, and, having removed with as much expedition as possible all his army from Portsmouth, commenced fortifying those posts.

[2] Rochambeau wrote a letter to Barras on August 15th, to which Washington added the following postscript: "The sentiments contained in the foregoing letter perfectly accord with my opinion, and I am more inclined to adopt them as we have seen in the British Gazettes accounts of a squadron under the com-

enterprise against New York, and turn our attention towards the south, with a view, if we should not be able attempt Charleston itself, to recover and secure the States of Virginia, North Carolina, and the country of South Carolina and Georgia. We may add a further inducement for giving up this first-mentioned enterprise, which is the arrival of a reinforcement of near three thousand Hessian recruits. For this purpose we have determined to remove the whole of the French army, and as large a detachment of the American as can be spared, to Chesapeake, to meet your Excellency there.

The following appear to us the principal cases, which will present themselves, and upon which we shall be obliged ultimately to form our plans. We have therefore stated them with a few short observations upon each. Your Excellency will be pleased to revolve them in your own mind, and prepare your own opinion by the time we shall have the pleasure of meeting you in Virginia.

First, What shall be done, if the enemy should be found with the greater part of their force in Virginia, upon the arrival of the French fleet? Second, Should only a detachment be found there? Thirdly, Should the British force be totally withdrawn from thence?

mand of Admiral Digby said to be intended to reinforce the British fleets in these seas. Should this squadron actually arrive, form a junction with Admiral Rodney & Graves, and find the French naval force separated, it might eventually prove fatal to the fleets of his most Christian Majesty, commanded by the Count de Grasse and yourself. I cannot avoid repeating therefore in earnest terms the request of the Count de Rochambeau, that you would form the junction, and as soon as possible, with the Count de Grasse in Chesapeake Bay."

Upon the first, it appears to us, that we ought, without loss of time, to attack the enemy with our united force.

Upon the second, it appears proper to destine such part of our force as will be amply sufficient to reduce the enemy's detachment, and then determine what use shall be made of the remainder. And here two things present themselves for our consideration. The enemy will either have sent a greater part of their force from Virginia to New York or to Charleston. If to New York, (which is the least probable under present circumstances,) Charleston will have but a moderate garrison, and it may be possible to attack it to advantage. If to Charleston, then the enemy will be so superior to General Greene, that they will be able to regain the whole of the State of South Carolina, and of consequence Georgia. We therefore think, that, in this latter case, such a force at least should be detached to South Carolina, as will enable us to keep the field and confine the enemy in or near to Charleston.

In the third case, which we stated, we mean that, of supposing the enemy should have totally evacuated Virginia, it appears to us necessary to make a solid establishment at Portsmouth, or any other place if more proper, in order to render a fleet in Chesapeake Bay entirely secure, and to employ the remainder of our land force and such vessels as may be proper for the service, as has been explained in the preceding article; that is, either in the siege of Charleston, if the garrison shall be found sufficiently weak to war-

rant the attempt, or to cover and secure the country, should it be found otherwise.

Returning back to the enterprise against New York will depend on a number of circumstances, the discussion of which we will leave until we have the happiness of a conference with your Excellency. We have only to observe, that the execution of all or any of the plans, which we have proposed, go upon the supposition of a decided naval superiority; except that of marching a reinforcement into South Carolina.

We would beg leave to take up so much of your Excellency's time, as to point out to you the vast importance of Charleston, and what advantages the enemy derive from the possession of it. It is the center of their power in the south. By holding it they preserve a dangerous influence throughout the whole State, as it is the only port, and the only place from whence the people can procure those articles of foreign produce, which are essential to their support; and it in great measure serves to cover and keep in subjection the State of Georgia. From thence the enemy can also establish small posts in North Carolina; and, if they maintain a post in Chesapeake, they keep up the appearance of possessing four hundred miles upon the coast, and of consequence have a pretext for setting up claims, which may be very detrimental to the interests of America in European councils.

We are not sufficiently acquainted with the position of Charleston, neither is it necessary at this time to enter into a detail of the proper mode of attacking it, or of the probability which we should have of

succeeding. For these we will refer you to Brigadier-General Duportail, commander of the corps of engineers in the service of the United States, who will have the honor of presenting this. This gentleman, having been in Charleston as principal engineer during the greater part of the siege, and in the environs of it as a prisoner of war a considerable time afterwards, had opportunities of making very full observations, which he judiciously improved.

A variety of cases, different from those we have stated, may occur. It is for this reason that we have thought proper to send General Duportail to your Excellency. He is fully acquainted with every circumstance of our affairs in this quarter, and we recommend him to your Excellency as an officer upon whose abilities and in whose integrity you may place the fullest confidence. We would observe, that it will be very essential to the despatch of the business in contemplation, for you to send up to Elk River, at the head of the Chesapeake Bay, all your frigates, transports, and vessels proper for the conveyance of the French and American troops down the bay. We shall endeavor to have as many as can be found in Baltimore and other ports secured, but we have reason to believe they will be very few. We have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, attachment, esteem, &c.[1]

[1] This letter was signed jointly by General Washington and Count de Rochambeau.

Diary, July 14th.—"Received despatches from the Count de Barras, announcing the intended departure of Count de Grasse from Cape François with between twenty-five and twenty-nine sail of the line, and three thousand two

TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, DOBBS'S FERRY,
17 August, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have in confidence imparted to you the alteration of our late plan, and made you acquainted with our intended operations. Besides the provisions necessary at the Head of Elk to carry the troops down the bay, a very considerable quantity will be wanted in Virginia. I should suppose three hundred barrels of flour, as many of salt meat, and eight or ten hogsheads of rum would be sufficient at Elk. For what will be consumed in Virginia, I imagine the order must be general, as we can neither ascertain the number of

hundred land troops, on the 3d instant, for the Chesapeake Bay; and the anxiety of the latter to have every thing in the most perfect readiness to commence our operations at the moment of his arrival, as he should be under the necessity, from particular engagements with the Spaniards, to be in the West Indies by the middle of October. The Count de Barras at the same time intimated his intentions of an enterprise against Newfoundland; in opposition to which both Count de Rochambeau and myself remonstrated, as being impolitic and dangerous under the probability of Rodney's coming on this coast.

"Matters having now come to a crisis, and a decided plan to be determined on, I was obliged,—from the shortness of Count de Grasse's promised stay on this coast, the apparent disinclination of their naval officers to force the harbor of New York, and the feeble compliance of the States with my requisitions for men hitherto, and the little prospect of greater exertion in future,—to give up all ideas of attacking New York, and instead thereof to remove the French troops and a detachment from the American army to the Head of Elk, to be transported to Virginia for the purpose of coöperating with the force from the West Indies against the troops in that State."

In the letter which accompanied the despatches above mentioned, Count de Barras said that Count de Grasse did not require him to form a junction with the West India squadron, but left him at liberty to undertake any other enterprise which he might think proper. In conformity with this permission, and with the spirit of the original but contingent instructions from the ministers, he proposed an expedition to Newfoundland, and said he should wish to take with him the land forces that had been left at Newport under M. de Choisy. This

men, which will be drawn together, or the time they will be employed.

I have written to the Count de Grasse, and have requested him to send up his light vessels of every kind to Elk; but I would nevertheless wish to have all that may be at Baltimore and the upper parts of the bay secured. I shall therefore be obliged to you to take measures at a proper time for that purpose. When that time will be, and when you shall give orders for the deposit at Elk, I will hereafter inform you. I shall direct the quartermaster in due season to take up all the small craft in Delaware for the purpose of transporting the troops from Trenton to Christeen. Should he have occasion, for advice or assistance from you upon this occasion, I must request you to give him both. I am confident it will be necessary to give the American troops, destined for southern services, one month's pay in specie. This will amount to about dollars. If it will be possible

step was strongly disapproved by both General Washington and Count de Rochambeau; and, as soon as he received their remonstrance against it, Count de Barras resolved to proceed to the Chesapeake.

It is probable, likewise, that some degree of personal feeling had its influence on the wishes of Count de Barras. In the council of war, which was held some time before, respecting the removal of the fleet to Boston, after a debate indicating a little warmth among the officers, Count de Rochambeau represents M. de Barras as using the following language. "No person is more interested than I am in the arrival of M. de Grasse in these seas. He was my junior; he has just been appointed lieutenant-general. At the moment his approach is made known, I shall set sail to put myself under his orders. I will finish this campaign; I will never make another."—*Mémoires de Rochambeau*, Tom. i., p. 276. Hence it appears that the two naval commanders stood in a delicate relation to each other; and it may be presumed that this was the reason why Count de Grasse left Count de Barras at liberty to join him or not, as he should be inclined; and also why the latter preferred a separate enterprise.—*Sparks*.

for you to procure this sum, you will infinitely oblige me and will much benefit the service. I shall also stand in need of a sum of specie for secret services, I suppose about five hundred guineas. I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

You are to take command of all the troops remaining in this department, consisting of the two regiments of New Hampshire, ten of Massachusetts, and five of Connecticut infantry, the corps of invalids, Sheldon's legion, the third regiment of artillery, together with all such State troops and militia, as are retained in service, of those which would have been under my own command.

The security of West Point and the posts in the Highlands is to be considered the first object of your attention. In order to effect this, you will make such dispositions as in your judgment the circumstances shall from time to time require; taking care to have as large a supply of salted provisions as possible constantly on hand; to have the fortifications, works, and magazines repair-

[1] To this request for money Mr. Morris made a very discouraging reply, stating that he had none, but would make every possible exertion. See his answer in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. xi., p. 431.

On the 17th Washington mapped out the following line of march for the French army:

Sunday, 19th, to North Castle, 14 miles
Monday, 20th, to King's Ferry, 18 miles
Allowing for the common chances of winds and weather it may take till
Thursday, 22d, to cross the North River
Friday, 23d, to Suffrans, 16 miles
Saturday, 24th, to Pumpton Meet'g H'se, 14 miles
Sunday, 25th, to Whippany, 15
Monday, 26th, to Bullion's Tavern, 15
Tuesday, 27th, to Somerset Court House, 14
Wednesday, 28th, to Princeton, 14
Thursday, 29th, to Trenton, 12.

ed and perfected as far as may be; to have the garrison at least in all cases kept up to its present strength; to have the minuter arrangements and plans for the defence and support of this important post perfectly understood and vigorously acted upon, in case of any attempt against it. Ample magazines of *wood* and *forage* are to be laid in against the approaching winter. The former should be cut on the margin of the river, and transported by water to the garrison The latter ought to be collected from the country below the lines, in the greatest quantities possible, and deposited in such places as you shall judge proper.

The force now put under your orders, it is presumed, will be sufficient for all the purposes above mentioned; as well as to yield a very considerable protection and cover to the country, without hazarding the safety of the posts in the Highlands. This is to be esteemed, as it respects the friendly inhabitants and resources of the country, an extremely interesting object; but, when compared with the former, of a secondary nature. The protection of the northern and western frontiers of the State of New York, as well as of those parts of that and other States most contiguous and exposed to the ravages and depredations of the enemy, will claim your attention. But, as the contingencies, which are to be expected in the course of the campaign, may be so various, unforeseen, and almost infinite, that no particular line of conduct can be prescribed for them, upon all such occasions you will be governed by your own prudence and discretion, in which the fullest confidence is placed.

Although your general rule of conduct will be to act on the defensive only, yet it is not meant to prohibit you from striking a blow at the enemy's posts, or detachments, should a fair opportunity present itself.

The most eligible position for your army, in my opinion, will be above (i. e. on the north side of) the Croton; as well for the purpose of supporting the garrison of West Point, as annoying the enemy, and covering the country, as for the security and repose of your troops. Waterbury's brigade, which may be posted towards the Sound, Sheldon's corps, the State troops of New York, and other light parties, may occasionally be made use of to hold the enemy in check, and carry on the *petite guerre* with

them ; but I would recommend keeping your force as much collected and as compact as the nature of the service will admit, doing by corps instead of detachments whenever it is practicable, and above all exerting yourself most strenuously and assiduously, while the troops are in a camp of repose, to make them perfect in their exercise and manœuvres, and to establish the most regular system of discipline and duty. The good of the service and emulation of corps will, I am persuaded, prompt the officers and men to devote their whole time and attention to the pleasing and honorable task of becoming masters of their profession. The uncertainty, which the present movement of the army will probably occasion with the enemy, ought to be increased by every means in your power, and the deception kept up as long as possible.

It will not be expedient to prevent the militia which were ordered from coming in, until the arrival of the Count de Grasse, or something definite or certain is known from the southward ; and even then, circumstances may (but of this you will be advised) render it advisable to keep the enemy at New York in check, to prevent their detaching to reinforce their southern army, or to harass the inhabitants on the seacoast.

The redoubt on the east side of Dobbs's Ferry is to be dismantled and demolished, the platforms to be taken up and transported up the river, if it can conveniently be done. The blockhouse on the other side to be maintained, or evacuated and destroyed, as you shall think proper. The water-guards and other precautions to prevent a surprise, you will be pleased to take into your consideration, and regulate in such a manner as you shall judge most expedient. You will be pleased, also, to keep me regularly advised of every important event, which shall take place in your department. Given under my hand at Head-Quarters, this 19th day of August, 1781.

P. S. By the act of Congress of the 3d of October, 1780, a return is to be made to them annually on or before the 1st of September of the troops belonging to the several states that requisitions may be made for completing the same. This you will be pleased to have done by the troops under your command. The preservation of the boats is a matter of very great importance to which you will attend. Let all the new boats and such others

as are not absolutely necessary and allotted to the service of the garrison, be hauled up and put under the care of a guard so that the person to whom they are committed shall be accountable for every boat. The abuses committed by people belonging to commissioned whale boats on Long Island ought to be enquired into and suppressed especially as Congress have ordered those commissions to be revoked.[1]

[1] "I have the pleasure to inform your Excellency, that my troops arrived at the [King's] Ferry yesterday, and began to pass the river at ten o'clock in the morning, and by sunrise of this day they were all completely on this side of the river. I hope your army will be enabled to cross with the same facility when they arrive."—*Washington to Rochambeau*, 21 August, 1781.

The French army marched by the way of White Plains, North Castle, Pine's Bridge, and Crompond, and crossed the river with all their baggage and stores between the 22d and 25th. The two armies pursued their march to Trenton by different routes; one column passing through Chatham, Springfield, and Brunswick, for the purpose of keeping up as long as possible an appearance of threatening Staten Island, or of marching round to Sandy Hook to facilitate the entrance of the French fleet into the harbor. A French bakery was also established at Chatham, as a blind to the enemy, which should strengthen the opinion that operations were intended in that quarter. General Washington remained with the army till the 30th, when he and Count de Rochambeau set off for Philadelphia, and arrived there the next day. He immediately applied himself to provide vessels, and other means of transporting the army, baggage, and stores from Trenton to the Head of Elk. So few vessels could be found, that one regiment only went by water, with the stores, down the Delaware and up Christiana Creek. All the remaining troops marched by land, and passed through Philadelphia. General Lincoln had the immediate command of the army in its progress southward.

An extract from Mr. Morris's Diary, containing an animated account of General Washington's reception in Philadelphia on this occasion, may be seen in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. xi., p. 462.—*Sparks*.

"Agreeably to my intentions communicated to you on the 15th instant, the troops destined for the southern quarter are now in motion. The American detachment is already on the west side of the Hudson. The French army I expect will reach the Ferry this day. Our march will be continued with all the dispatch that our circumstances will admit. As it will be of great importance towards the success of our present enterprise, that the enemy on the arrival of the fleet should not have it in their power to effect their retreat, I cannot omit to repeat to you my most earnest wish, that the land and naval forces, which you will have with you, may so combine their operations, that the British army may not be able to escape. The particular mode of doing this I shall not at this distance attempt to dictate."—*Washington to Lafayette*, 21 August, 1781.

TO ROBERT MORRIS AND RICHARD PETERS.[1]

HEAD QUARTERS, KING'S FERRY
21 August, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,

I have devoted the first moment of my time, which I could command (while the troops are halted for the French army at this place), to give my sentiments unreservedly on the several matters contained in your favor of the 13th instant. This I will attempt to do with all that frankness and sincerity, which, from your own candor in your communications, you have a right to expect, and for doing which with the greater freedom the importance of the subject will be my apology. Persuaded that we are influenced by the same motives, and anxious in pursuit of the same object, I am only unhappy, that I should be forced to dissent in a single instance from the opinion of those, for whose judgment and ability I have the highest deference, respecting the surest and best mode for attaining that object.

But, being at the same time fully sensible of the necessity of prosecuting the war with as much vigor as our circumstances will admit, and of using the strictest economy in the prosecution of it; upon these very principles, I beg leave to give it as my opinion, that a reduction of the number of officers

[1] Mr. Morris, as superintendent of finance, and Mr. Peters, as a member of the Board of War, had been appointed commissioners by Congress to proceed to head-quarters, and consult the Commander-in-chief respecting the arrangement and numbers of the army for the ensuing year.—*Journals*, July 31st. They had recently been in the camp for that purpose, and had addressed a letter to General Washington containing several queries on that subject. See the letter in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. xi., p. 426. The basis of their scheme was a reduction of the army.

and men as fixed by the last arrangement, or any material alteration of the establishment of the army for the next campaign, would not in the present situation of affairs be expedient, for the following reasons.

In the first place, because the enemy must resolve to prosecute the war, or be disposed to make a peace; in either of which cases, a respectable army in the field on our part will, I conceive, more than compensate the expenses of it, and will eventually be the best and most economical system of policy we can possibly act upon. For, should the enemy still be determined to carry on the war with obstinacy, not only policy, but even necessity, would urge us to keep up a superior army, as the surest and only means of forcing them to a peace, and freeing us from the calamities and expenses of the war; as it is evident from many circumstances, that they have relied more for success on our want of exertions, than upon their own military prowess or resources, and that this has been one principal inducement of their persevering hitherto. But, on the other hand, should they be inclined to a pacification, a powerful and well appointed army would both enable us to dictate our own terms at the negotiation, and hasten the completion of it.

In addition to this, whoever considers how much more expensive and less serviceable militia are than Continental troops, how heavy and repeated a burden on the public their bounties are, when they are hired; when drafted, how disagreeable and frequently dis-

tressing for them to be torn from their families to a life with which they are totally unacquainted; how precarious and uncertain the aid is, which may be expected from them in such cases; what glorious opportunities have been lost by us, and what almost ruinous advantages have been taken by the enemy in times of our weakness, for want of a permanent force in the field,—will, I am persuaded, be convinced, that we ought to have constantly such an army as is sufficient to operate against the enemy, and supersede the necessity of calling forth the militia except on the most extraordinary occasions. I will also beg leave to remind you, Gentlemen, of the great reduction of the number of regiments on the Continental establishment, viz., from one hundred and sixteen to fifty since the year 1777, and to observe, in consequence, that, in my opinion, we do not find the enemy so much exhausted, or their strength so debilitated, as to warrant any farther diminution of our established force. By one of the late intercepted letters from Lord George Germaine, it appears the enemy considered the number of men, in their provincial corps only, greater than the whole number of men in the service of the continent. Since which time the reinforcements that have arrived from Europe amount, by the best accounts I have been able to obtain, to at least four thousand men.

That the States are able, by proper exertions, to furnish the number of men required by the last arrangement of the army, may I think rationally be supposed; as the population in many of them

has rather increased than diminished since the commencement of the war; and as the greater part of them do actually, when called upon in an emergency, give a sufficient number of men for services of short duration to complete their Continental regiments. That the country abounds with supplies of all kinds is acknowledged from all quarters. Whether the men can be obtained, or the resources drawn forth, is more than I will presume with certainty to determine; but one thing is certain, that it is idle to contend against great odds, when we have it in our power to do it upon equal or even advantageous terms.

There are also several arguments, which I omit to enforce, that might be adduced particularly to prove the impropriety of reducing the number of officers, or making any considerable alteration in the system; such as our having found by experience, that the proportion of officers is not too great for the number of men; that the same or a greater proportion has been esteemed necessary in other more ancient services; and that the full complement is more indispensably requisite in ours, because there are a larger number of levies and recruits to train and discipline annually than is to be found in the regiments of other nations; and because a greater number of officers are taken from the line to perform the duties of the staff, than in most other services. It is likewise an established fact, that every alteration in the military system, or change in the arrangement, unless founded in the most obvious principles of utility, is attended with

uneasiness among the officers, confusion with regard to the disposition of the men, and frequently with irregularities and disagreeable consequences before it can be carried completely into execution. Perfect order throughout the whole army has but just been restored since the last arrangement took place. Another innovation in the present situation might be more mischievous in its effects.

Thus I have, Gentlemen, from a desire of faithfully performing my duty, from the experience (of whatever degree it is) which I have acquired in the service of my country, and from the knowledge I have of the present state of the army, given my sentiments on the first of your queries, which likewise involves the answer to your second. With regard to the third, I am of opinion, that the recruits ought if possible to be engaged for the war, or three years; but, if this cannot be done, that the community, district, or class, furnishing a man for a shorter term of services, ought to be compellable to have him replaced by the period when his time of service expires; and that funds ought to be established, if practicable, for recruiting the men engaged for short services, while they continue with the army, as it is found by experience that they may be enlisted with more facility and less expense, than under any other circumstances. With respect to the fourth, fifth, and sixth queries, I am in doubt whether any alteration can be made on those subjects, which shall tend essentially, (all things considered,) to the public good. I have the honor to be, &c."

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE STATES.

HEAD QUARTERS, KING'S FERRY,
21st August, 1781.

SIR,

I feel myself unhappy in being obliged to inform you that the circumstances, in which I find myself at this late period, have induced me to make an alteration of the main object which was at first adopted, and has hitherto been held in view, for the operations of this campaign. It gives me pain to say that the delay in the several states to comply with my requisitions of the 24th of May last, on which in a great measure depended the hopes of our success, in that attempt, has been one great and operative reason to lead to this alteration. Other circumstances, it is true, have had their weight in this determination, and it may, in the course of events, prove happy to the states, that this deviation from our main design has been adopted.

The fleet of the Count de Grasse, with a body of French troops on board, will make its first appearance in the Cheasapeak, which should the time of the fleet's arrival prove favorable, and should the enemy under Lord Cornwallis hold their present position in Virginia, will give us the fairest opportunity to reduce the whole British force in the south, and to ruin their boasted expectations in that quarter :—to effect this desirable object, it has been judged expedient, taking into consideration our own present circumstances, with the situation of the enemy in New York, and at the southward, to abandon the seige of the former, and to march a body of troops, consisting of a detachment from the American army, with the whole of the French troops, immediately to Virginia With this detachment, which will be very considerable, I have determined to march myself. The American troops are already on the west side of the Hudson, and the French army will arrive at King's Ferry this day. When the whole are crossed, our march will be continued with as much despatch as circumstances will admit.

The American army which will remain in this department, excepting two light companies and some few detachments, consists of the two New Hampshire regiments, ten of Massachusetts and five of Connecticut infantry, with Sheldon's legion, Crane's artillery, the state troops and militia, which with proper exertions of the states, will, it is expected, be sufficient to hold the enemy in

check at New York, and prevent their ravages on the frontiers. The command, during my absence, is given to Major-General Heath, who will have the honor to communicate with the States, on every occasion which may require their attention.

As the enemy's force in New York has been for some time past very considerable, and it is reported with a good degree of certainty, that they have lately received a very considerable reinforcement of German recruits, from Europe, it will be necessary still to send forward a great part, if not the whole of the militia requested from your state, in the same manner as though no alteration had taken place in our measures. You will therefore continue to send on at least —— men from your state to the orders of General Heath, with as much despatch as possible, unless you should be informed from him that this number need not be completed.

On this occasion I cannot omit to repeat to you my opinion, of the absolute importance of filling your continental battalions to their complete numbers, for the war, or three years. Not only our past experience for a course of years, but our present situation, should strongly enforce the necessity of this measure. Every campaign teaches us the increasing difficulty and expence of procuring short-termed levies, and their decreasing utility in the field. The large reinforcements which the enemy have this campaign sent to America, strongly indicate their expectations of the continuance of the war. Should this be the case, the best way to meet them is certainly with a permanent force, but should the war be drawing towards a close, a permanent and respectable army will give us the happiest prospects of a favorable peace. In every view, a permanent army should be the great object of the States to obtain, as they regard sound policy, prudence or economy. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE.

DEAR SIR, CHATHAM, 27 August 1781.

Accounts brought by several vessels to Philadelphia and to the eastward leave little doubt, that the Count de Grasse must have already arrived in the

Chesapeake, or that he must be very soon there. The Count de Rochambeau and myself have therefore determined that no time ought to be lost in making preparations for our transportation from Trenton to Christiana, and from the Head of Elk down the Chesapeake. I have written by this opportunity to Colonel Miles, and have directed him immediately to engage all the proper kind of craft for the navigation of the Delaware, which can be found in Philadelphia or in the creeks above and below it; and, as your advice may be useful to him, more especially so far as respects procuring the vessels at a distance from Philadelphia, I have desired him to wait upon you for that purpose. I shall also be obliged to you for using your influence with the gentlemen of Baltimore, to permit any vessels that may be in that port to come up to Elk and assist us in transportation. I have little doubt, from the cheerfulness with which they furnished the Marquis last winter, but they will comply with your requisition on the present occasion. But, lest there should be a necessity for the interference of the executive of the State, I have written to Governor Lee upon that and other matters. I enclose the letter under flying seal for your information, and you will be good enough to forward it by a chain of expresses which is established. Any vessels, which may be procured in the Chesapeake, should rendezvous as soon as possible, in Elk River.

You will be pleased to make the deposit of flour, rum, and salt meat at the Head of Elk, which I requested in a former letter. I am very fearful that about

fifteen hundred barrels of salt provisions, and thirty hogsheads of rum, which I directed to be sent from Connecticut and Rhode Island under convoy of the Count de Barras, would not have been ready when the fleet sailed from Newport. Should that have been the case, the disappointment will be great. I would wish you to see whether a like quantity of those articles can be procured in Philadelphia or in Maryland, if we should find that they have not gone round from the eastward.

I must entreat you, if possible, to procure one month's pay in specie for the detachment, which I have under my command. Part of those troops have not been paid any thing for a very long time past, and have upon several occasions shown marks of great discontent. The service they are going upon is disagreeable to the northern regiments; but I make no doubt that a *douceur* of a little hard money would put them in proper temper. If the whole sum cannot be obtained, a part of it will be better than none, as it may be distributed in proportion to the respective wants and claims of the men. The American detachment will assemble in this neighborhood to-day; the French army to-morrow. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] The pressure for money to pay the troops was in part relieved by a loan of twenty thousand hard dollars from Count de Rochambeau, which Mr. Morris engaged to replace by the 1st of October.—*Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. xi., p. 463. Colonel Laurens arrived in Boston from his mission to France on the 25th of August, bringing with him in cash two millions and a half of livres, being part of the donation of six millions, which had been recently given to the United States by the King of France. This was a seasonable supply, and enabled the superintendent of finance to fulfil his engagement.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

PHILADELPHIA, 2 September, 1781.

Nothing, my Dear Marquis, could have afforded me more satisfaction than the information, communicated in your two letters of the 21st and 24th ultimo, of the measures you had taken, and of the arrangements you were making, in consequence of the intelligence I had given you. Calculating upon the regular force under your immediate orders, the militia which have already been called for, and may be expected in the field, the whole of the French army, and the American corps now marching with Major-General Lincoln from the northward, in addition to the land forces expected on board of the fleet, I flatter myself we shall not experience any considerable difficulties from the want of men to carry our most favorite projects into execution. The means for prosecuting the siege with rapidity, energy, and success, and of supplying the troops while they are engaged in that service, as they are more precarious, have been and still continue to be the great objects of my concern and attention.

Heavy cannon, ordnance stores and ammunition, to a pretty large amount, are now forwarding. General Knox, in whose immediate province these arrangements are, who knows the whole of our resources, is making every exertion to furnish a competent supply, and will be on the spot to remedy every deficiency, as far as the circumstances will possibly admit. Having also from the first moment been extremely anxious respecting the *supplies* of the army, (in

which I comprehend not only provisions of the bread and meat kind, &c., but also forage and the means of transportation,) I had written pressingly to the governors of Maryland and Virginia on that subject previous to the receipt of your favor of the 21st of August. I have since reiterated my entreaties, and enforced, in the strongest terms I was capable of using, the requisitions for specific supplies made by Congress, and now again called for by the superintendent of finance from the states of Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland ; as to the supplies of Pennsylvania, we are to look for them from the financier himself. I hope and trust the efforts of these States and of Virginia will be uncommonly great, and proportionate to the magnitude of the object before us.

In order to introduce some kind of system and method in our supplies, to know with certainty what may be depended upon, and to put the business in the best possible train of execution, I shall send forward the heads of departments, as soon as their presence can be dispensed with. I have spoken to the surgeon-general respecting hospital stores and medicines. All that can be done will be done in that department. As to clothing I am sorry to inform you, little is to be expected, except in the article of shoes, of which a full supply will be sent on.

In my progress to the southward, I shall take care, as far as practicable, to make all the arrangements necessary for the operation in view, and to impress the executives with an idea of the absolute necessity of furnishing their quotas of supplies regularly; as

we have no other resources to rely upon for the support of the army, and especially, as I am very apprehensive, that a quantity of fifteen hundred barrels of salted provisions, which I had ordered to be shipped under convoy of the Count de Barras, did not arrive in time for that purpose.

But, my dear Marquis, I am distressed beyond expression to know what has become of the Count de Grasse, and for fear that the English fleet, by occupying the Chesapeake, (towards which my last accounts say they were steering,) may frustrate all our flattering prospects in that quarter. I am also not a little solicitous for the Count de Barras, who was to have sailed from Rhode Island on the 23d ultimo, and from whom I have heard nothing since that time. Of many contingencies we will hope for the most propitious events. Should the retreat of Lord Cornwallis by water be cut off, by the arrival of either of the French fleets, I am persuaded you will do all in your power to prevent his escape by land. May that great felicity be reserved for you.[1]

[1] On the 2d, the Count de Grasse informed Washington of his arrival in the Chesapeake. In reply Washington wrote on the 6th :

"Expecting to have the honor of a personal interview with your Excellency almost as soon as this will reach your hand, I shall not give you the trouble in writing, of a particular detail in my designs. I will only inform you that the van of the two armies, the French and Americans, consisting of about two thousand men, (there not being transports for the whole) will be embarked in about two days, and will fall down the Chesapeake to form a junction with the troops under the command of the Count de St. Simon, and the Marquis de Lafayette, and to co-operate in blocking up Ld. Cornwallis in York River, and preventing him to make his retreat by land, or collecting any supplies from the country. This junction of the van of our troops is proposed to be made in James River, unless your Excellency and the commanders of the land troops should judge some other point of debarkation to be more favorable to our inten-

You see how critically important the present moment is. For my own part, I am determined still to persist, with unremitting ardor, in my present plan, unless some inevitable and insuperable obstacles are thrown in the way. Adieu, my dear Marquis if you get any thing new from any quarter, send it I pray you, *on the spur of speed* for I am almost all impatience and anxiety, at the same time that I am, &c.

P. S. Since writing the above I have received your favor of the 25th. Col. Laurens has just arrived in this town from France via Boston, but I know not yet what intelligence he brings.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

WILLIAMSBURG, 15 September, 1781.[1]

SIR,

I have the honor to inform Congress, that I arrived at this place last evening; that soon after my arrival, I received the pleasing intelligence, that the Count

tions; in which case you will be pleased to meet the transports while on their way, with orders to proceed to any other point which may be fixed on.

"The remainder of the troops from hence will be forwarded with all the expedition our circumstances will admit. In the mean time, as it will be of the greatest importance to prevent the escape of his Lordship from his present position, I am persuaded that every measure, which prudence can dictate, will be improved for that purpose, until the arrival of our complete force, when I hope his Lordship will be compelled to yield his ground to the superior power of our combined forces."

[1] "We are thus far on our way to you. The Count de Rochambeau has just arrived. General Chastellux will be here, and we propose, after resting tomorrow, to be at Fredericksburg on the night of the 12th. The 13th we shall reach New Castle; and the next day we expect to have the pleasure of seeing you at your encampment. Should there be any danger as we approach you, I should be obliged if you will send a party of horse towards New Kent Court-

de Grasse, who had put to sea on the 5th in pursuit of the British fleet, had returned to his former station at Cape Henry, having driven the British from the coast, taken two of their frigates, and effected a junction with the squadron of the Count de Barras.

In consequence of my having been informed of the sailing of the fleet from the Capes, and being apprehensive that we were not assured of the security of our navigation in the bay, I had ordered the troops, who were embarked at the Head of Elk, to stop until we had further intelligence. Orders are this morning gone on to press them forward with every despatch possible.[2] I am distressed to find, that the supplies of the army collecting here are on too precarious a footing. Already a want of provisions has been experienced. Every measure is taking, that is in my power, to be better assured of our supplies in future. How far I shall succeed in my endeavors, time must discover. I have the honor to be, &c.

House to meet us."—*Washington to Lafayette*, Mount Vernon, 10 September, 1781.

The following were the different stages and halting-places for the cavalry and teams; Bald's Friars, thence to Bush, Baltimore, Elk Ridge Landing, Bladensburg, Georgetown, from thence to Falls of Rappahannock, (avoiding Occoquan Ferry), Caroline Court-House, New Castle, Williamsburg. For the French, the following course: Lower ferry, on Susquehannah, Baltimore, Elk Ridge Landing, Bladensburg, Georgetown, Fredericksburg ["to avoid an inconvenient ferry over Occoquan and Rappahannock river at the town of Fredericksburg. The former may, I believe be forded at Falmouth (two miles above Fredericksburg), and the latter by leaving the common rout a little to the left from Georgetown."], Caroline Court-House, and New Castle.

[1] On his passage from the West Indies to the Chesapeake, Count de Grasse captured a British armed vessel, bound from Charleston to New York, in which was Lord Rawdon, who was taken prisoner and brought into the Chesapeake.

[2] "Every day we now lose is comparatively an age. As soon as it is in our power with safety, we ought to take our position near the enemy. Hurry on

TO THE COUNT DE GRASSE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WILLIAMSBURG,
15 September, 1781.

SIR,

I had the honor to receive your Excellency's letter of the 4th of this month soon after the arrival at this place. I am at a loss to express the pleasure, which I have in congratulating your Excellency on your return to your former station in the bay, and the happy circumstance of forming a junction with the squadron of the Count de Barras. I take particular satisfaction in felicitating your Excellency on the glory of having driven the British fleet from the coast, and taking two of their frigates. These happy events, and the decided superiority of your fleet, gives us the happiest presages of the most complete success in our combined operations in this bay.

It is with much regret, that I find the want of transports in the bay has retarded the coming on of the troops expected from the northward. If it is possible for your Excellency to give us any assistance in this distress, it will be attended with inexpressible advantage to the prosecution of our measures, and will be acknowledged with the highest gratitude. Such of our troops, as could not be embarked at the

then, my dear Sir, with your troops on the wings of speed. The want of our men and stores is now all that retards our immediate operations. Lord Cornwallis is improving every moment to the best advantage; and every day that is given him to make his preparations may cost us many lives to encounter them.

"I am very sensible of your vigilance and activity. My impatience, however, to commence our operations impels me to write as I have done. You will come with your troops to the College Landing in James River, where, unless you receive other orders, you will debark."—*Washington to Major-General Lincoln*, Williamsburg, 15 September, 1781.

Head of Elk, are marching to Baltimore, where they are to be put on board such transports as may be collected at that place.

It is very much the wish of the Count de Rochambeau, as well as myself, to have the honor of an interview with your Excellency; but our particular circumstances render us dependent on your goodness for the means of conveyance. If your Excellency could despatch some fast-sailing cutter to receive us on board, and will inform us your time and place, we shall be very happy to attend you, at the earliest moment you shall fix. Count Ferson, an aid to Count de Rochambeau, is sent on to hurry down the troops embarking on the Bay. If your Excellency can furnish him the means of proceeding up the bay, it will be very agreeable. I am, &c.

P. S. Since writing the above, I am informed with much pleasure, that your Excellency has anticipated my wishes in sending transports up the bay.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

WILLIAMSBURG, 15 September, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have to request you, in the most earnest manner, to send forward all the recruits that are furnished by the State of Pennsylvania for their line. Let it not be said, that those troops are kept from service for

[1] On the 10th of August, Count de Barras arrived in the Chesapeake, with the squadron from Rhode Island, the French siege artillery, and the land forces

want of a few articles, which they could wish to be furnished with, when other troops doing duty in the field are combating almost every distress imaginable in the want of almost every necessary. If any thing in the power of the State can be instantly done towards their equipment, I wish the authorities to be called upon, and hope they will furnish what they can without delay. It is the highest absurdity in the world to keep those troops in a state of idleness at great expense, and at the same time for want of them to put the public to the same or much greater charge, by calling in the aid of militia, which we are now obliged to do. I beg you, therefore, to hurry on those troops, with all the expedition in your power, by water down the Chesapeake, embarking at Baltimore, where craft can doubtless be found by taking the proper precaution, and their transportation will be perfectly secure, so long as the fleet maintains its present station. The place of debarkation will be in James River, probably at the College Landing, unless further orders shall be given to carry them to some other place nearer the point of our operations. I am, &c.[1]

under M. de Choisy. Ten transports from this squadron, two frigates lately captured from the enemy, and other prize vessels, were immediately despatched up the bay to receive on board the French troops, who could not find means of transportation from the Head of Elk and Baltimore, and had pursued their route by land. They embarked at Annapolis, and proceeded by water to James River.

[1] *From the Diary*, September 17th.—"In company with Count de Rochambeau, the Chevalier de Chastellux, General Knox, and General Duportail, I set out for an interview with the admiral, and arrived on board the Ville de Paris (off Cape Henry) the next day about noon; and, having settled most points with him to my satisfaction, except not obtaining an assurance of sending ships above York, I embarked on board of Queen Charlotte, the vessel I went down

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

The noble and generous Support which is given to this Country by His Most Christian Majesty, does, as it ought, fill the breast of every American with gratitude & Love ;—The zeal and alacrity with which His Officers strive to carry His Royal intentions into execution, merit our highest admiration & applause, a recent instance of this is now before us : But the distressed and unfortunate circumstances of these United States, and the dispersed situation of their Troops, are such, as do not admit their military operations to be carried on with that celerity which could be wished, nor place them on that advantageous ground, from which they may reap all that benefit from this generous Aid, that in other circumstances they might expect to receive.

The measures which are now persuing are big with great events ; the Peace & Independence of this Country, and the general tranquillity of Europe will, it is more than probable, result from our Compleat success ;—disgrace to ourselves, Triumph to the Enemy, and probable Ruin to the American cause, will follow our disappointment.

The first is certain, if the powerful Fleet, now in Chesapeak Bay or such part of it as will be competent to the purpose, can

in ; but, by reason of hard blowing and contrary winds, I did not reach Williamsburg again till the 22d."

Count de Grasse also gave notice that his fleet could not continue on this station beyond the 1st of November.

Intelligence was received on the 22d that Admiral Digby had arrived at New York with a reinforcement of six ships of the line.

Major-General Howe expressed a little feeling at not being called to the southern army. In reply Washington wrote : "General Heath stood first, and therefore took the command he now has. Lord Sterling, who came next in command, from his age and infirmities, I viewed unequal to the toils and fatigues of the march, and consequent hard duties of the expedition ; on which ground, and a candid representation of it to his Lordship, he perfectly acquiesced. General Lincoln was the next major-general on the list. For him no excuse could be formed ; he therefore filled the command that was necessary, under this view of the case, your good sense, with your knowledge of military duty and service, I dare say, will make you easy with your present lot ; altho' you might esteem yourself more happy in another situation."—24 September, 1781.

remain to the close of a regular operation, which, from various unforeseen causes, may be protracted beyond our present expectations,—The second is much to be apprehended, if from the fear of loosing the Aid of the Fleet, the operations by Land are precipitated faster than a necessary prudence & regard to the lives of men, will warrant—the first may be slow, but sure—the second must be bloody & precarious.

Under this state of matters, General Washington begs, that the Count de Grasse will have the goodness to give him a Resolution of the following Questions—Viz :

QUESTIONS.	ANSWERS.
1st. Is your Excellency restricted to any certain time for the continuance of the Fleet upon this Coast? If any time is fixed, beyond which your orders will not warrant your stay in this Bay, or if the persuit of any other object should more attract your attention, — be pleased to name the day to which your departure is determined?	1st. The Instructions of Count de Grasse fix his departure to the 15th of October, and some engagements which he has made for other operations oblige him to be punctual; But having already taken much upon himself, he will also engage to stay to the end of October.
2d. If your Excellency should find yourself under a necessity to return the Troops, under the Command of the Marquis de St. Simon, to the West Indies, (however to be lamented such circumstance must be) may I not be assured that a detachment of the Fleet may be employed as a Convoy to those Troops, and that the Main Fleet may remain in the Bay to form a sufficient cover	2d. The Troops, under the orders of Marquis de St. Simon, have a particular destination, and I am not altogether at Liberty to dispose of them; But as my Vessels will not depart before the 1st of November, you may count upon those Troops to that period, for the Reduction of York.

to our operations against the Enemy—to prevent their receiving supplies by water, and to protect us from any attempt from the British to give relief to Lord Cornwallis and raise our siege ;—and their Fleet to remain untill the close of our operations ?

3d. Will it, in your Excellency's opinion, be practicable to force, with your Ships, the passage of the York River, so as to get above the enemy ? This measure, if effected, will be attended with almost infinite advantages, not only, as it will secure our Communication to both sides of the River, which otherwise must be very lengthy and tedious, but will give us the Navigation of the River, and enable us to draw the supplies of the Country throughout its whole extent ;—and will also form the compleat investiture of the Enemy's Posts ?

4th. So long as the Enemy possesses both sides of the River, it will be necessary to keep up our force on both sides, —to aid our efforts in this operation, will it be in your Excellency's power to spare us any number of men from on board the Fleet, to continue so long as this measure is necessary ? if any, what number ?

3d. The thing is not impossible with a good Wind and favorable Tide ; But I do not find that operation very useful. Our communication can be established, and our provisions drawn from the East side of York River without requiring the men & Vessells in their passage between the Batteries ; But I suspend my definitive answer until I can reconoitre the local situation and force of the Enemy ; I shall certainly do every thing in my power.

4th. I have offered, and I again offer 1800 or 2000 men from my Ships ; But I wish that these Troops may not be employed but in a Coup de Main.

5th. If in the prosecution of our operations, our prospects of success should wear a favorable aspect, I shall be glad to be decided whether your Excellency will be able to detach some suitable vessels from your Fleet, sufficient to block in the British Troops at Wilmington, and to possess the Harbour of Charlestown?

5th. The form of my Vessels do not admit of the enterprise.

6th. If our operations should be of such a nature as to require it, will your Excellency be able to lend us some heavy Cannon and other Artillery,—powder also—and in what number and quantity?

6th. I can give some Cannon and powder.—The two Coms. (?) which I have had admit of my sparing but a small quantity of the latter.

GO. WASHINGTON.

LE COMTE DE GRASSE.

Sept. 17, 1781.

TO THE COUNT DE GRASSE.

WILLIAMSBURG, 25 September, 1781.

SIR,

I cannot conceal from your Excellency the painful anxiety under which I have labored since the receipt of the letter, with which you honored me on the 23d instant. The naval movements, which your Excellency states there as possible, considering the intelligence communicated to you by the Baron de Closen, make it incumbent upon me to represent the consequences that would arise from them, and to urge a perseverance in the plan already agreed upon. Give me leave, in the first place, to repeat to your Excel-

lency, that the enterprise against York, under the protection of your ships, is as certain as any military operation can be rendered by a decisive superiority of strength and means; that it is in fact reducible to calculation; and that the surrender of the British garrison will be so important in itself and its consequences; and that it must necessarily go a great way towards terminating the war, and securing the invaluable objects of it to the allies.

Your Excellency's departure from the Chesapeake, by affording an opening for the succor of York, which the enemy would instantly avail himself of, would frustrate these brilliant prospects; and the consequence would be, not only the disgrace and loss of renouncing an enterprise, upon which the fairest expectations of the allies have been founded, after the most expensive preparations and uncommon exertions and fatigues, but the disbanding perhaps of the whole army for want of provisions.

The present theatre of the war is totally deficient in means of land transportation, being intersected by large rivers, and its whole dependence for interior communication being upon small vessels. The country has been so much exhausted besides by the ravages of the enemy, and the subsistence of our own army, that our supplies can only be drawn from a distance, and under cover of a fleet mistress of the Chesapeake. I most earnestly entreat your Excellency farther to consider, that, if the present opportunity should be missed, that if you should withdraw your maritime force from the position agreed upon, that no future day can restore to us a similar occasion

for striking a decisive blow; that the British will be indefatigable in strengthening their most important maritime points; and that the epoch of an honorable peace will be more remote than ever.

The confidence, with which I feel myself inspired by the energy of character and the naval talents, which so eminently distinguish your Excellency, leaves me no doubt, that, upon a consideration of the consequences, which must follow your departure from the Chesapeake, that your Excellency will determine upon the possible measure, which the dearest interests of the common cause would dictate. I had invariably flattered myself, from the accounts given me by skilful mariners, that your Excellency's position, moored in the Chesapeake, might be made so respectable as to bid defiance to any attempt on the part of the British fleet, at the same time that it would support the operations of the siege, secure the transportation of our supplies by water, and economize the most precious time by facilitating the debarkation of our heavy artillery and stores conveniently to the trenches in York River. It is to be observed, that the strength of the enemy's reinforcement announced under Admiral Digby, as we have the intelligence from the British, may not only be exaggerated, but altogether a *finesse;* and, supposing the account consistent with truth, their total force, it was hoped, would not put them in condition to attack with any prospect of success.

If the stationary position, which had been agreed upon, should be found utterly impracticable, there is an alternative, which however inferior, considered rela-

tively to the support and facility of our land operations, would save our affairs from ruin. This is, to cruise with your fleet within view of the Capes, so as effectually to prevent the entrance of any British vessels.

Upon the whole, I should esteem myself deficient in my duty to the common cause of France and America, if I did not persevere in entreating your Excellency to resume the plans, that have been so happily arranged ; and, if invincible maritime reasons prevent, I depend as a last resource upon your Excellency's pursuing the alternative above mentioned, and rendering the Chesapeake inaccessible to any enemy's vessel.

However the British admiral may manœuvre, and endeavor to divert your Excellency from the object in view, I can hardly admit a belief, that it can be his serious intention to engage in a general action with a fleet, whose force will be superior, supposing the most flattering accounts for the British to be true ; past experience having taught them to engage with caution, even upon equal terms, and forced from them acknowledgments which prove the respect with which they have been inspired. Let me add, Sir, that even a momentary absence of the French fleet may expose us to the loss of the British garrison at York ; as in the present state of affairs, Lord Cornwallis might effect the evacuation with the loss of his artillery and baggage, and such a sacrifice of men as his object would evidently justify.

The Marquis de Lafayette, who does me the honor to bear this to your Excellency, will explain many

particularities of our situation, which could not well be comprised in a letter. His candor and abilities are well known to your Excellency, and entitle him to the fullest confidence in treating of the most important interests. I have earnestly requested him not to proceed any farther than the Capes,[1] for fear of accidents, should your Excellency have put to sea. In this case he will despatch a letter to your Excellency in addition to this. I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

[1] This letter, sustained by the explanations and arguments of the Marquis de Lafayette, produced a change in the schemes of Count de Grasse; and he agreed to remain within the Capes, and blockade the bay during the siege. He laid the matter before a council of war. "The result has been," said he in his reply, "that the plan I had suggested was the most brilliant and glorious, but it would not fulfil the views we had proposed. It is consequently decided, that a large part of the fleet shall anchor in York River, that four or five vessels shall be stationed so as to pass up and down in James River, and that you shall aid us with the means to erect a battery on Point Comfort, where we can place cannon and mortars. We shall immediately proceed to execute this arrangement, and I hasten to give you notice, that we may act in concert for the advancement of our operations."

[2] "The resolutions that you have taken in our circumstances prove, that a great mind knows how to make personal sacrifices to secure an important general good. Fully sensible of those, which you have made on the present occasion, I flatter myself that the result of the operations, conducted under your auspices, will compensate them by its utility to the common cause. Your Excellency may depend on every assistance, that the allied armies can give, relatively to the battery which you propose at Point Comfort, and that our utmost exertions will be used in hastening the investment of the enemy."—*Washington to Count de Grasse*, 27 September, 1781.

Near the British works at Gloucester were stationed the legion of the Duke de Lauzun, and the Virginia militia under General Weedon. Those officers represented, that, considering the nature of the ground, their strength, and the facility with which the enemy might reinforce that post, an augmentation of their numbers was indispensable, both to enable them to occupy a good defensive position, and to confine the enemy within their lines. General Washington applied to Count de Grasse for a detachment of six or eight hundred marines to be sent from his ships on this service. M. de Choisy was the bearer of the letter making the request. The troops were obtained, though Count de Grasse spared them with reluctance, and desired that no future requisition of the kind

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, CAMP BEFORE YORK,
1 October, 1781.

SIR,

Last evening I was honored with your Excellency's favor of the 21st ulto., with its enclosure. The intelligence it contains, respecting the British fleet is very agreeable, and will be immediately transmitted to the Count de Grasse. In my last which bore date the 23d ultimo I informed that our preparations for a near investment of the enemy at York were fast ripening to a point. I have now to acquaint your Excellency, that I marched from Williamsburg with the whole army on the 28th, and approached within about two miles of the enemy, at York, at which distance a show was made of some opposition on our left; but, upon the Count de Rochambeau, who commands that part of the army, his moving a few pieces of field-artillery under direction of the Baron Viomé-nil, and giving a few shots the enemy retired. On the 29th, the American troops moved forward, and took their ground in front of the enemy's works on their left; no opposition, except a few scattered shots from a small work by Moor's Mill, on Wormleys creek and a battery on the left of Pigeon Quarter. A small fire all day from our riflemen and the enemy's Yagers. 30th in the morning, we discovered that the enemy had evacuated all their exterior line of works, and withdrawn themselves to those near the body of

might be made upon him, as his situation was critical, and he was unwilling to have his men so divided as to subject him to embarrassment in case of a contingency. The American and French troops at Gloucester were put under the command of M. de Choisy, who was a brigadier-general in the French service.

the town. By this means we are in possession of very advantageous grounds, which command in a very near advance almost the whole remaining line of their defence. All the expedition, that our circumstances will admit, is using to bring up our heavy artillery and stores and to open our batteries. This work I hope will be executed in a few days, when our fire will begin with great vigor.

The investment of the enemy is fully completed and drawn very near to their lines, except on the river above the town where their communication is still open. To prevent this and to complete the blockade, a request is gone to the Count de Grasse, desiring him to push if he thinks it practicable one or more ships above the town ; this, if effected, will answer many very valuable purposes. The position of the Count de Grasse is judiciously taken, the main fleet keeping their station in Lynnhaven Bay, and detachments made to secure the rivers ; the determination of the Count is favorably disposed to comply with our wishes in every necessary co-operation. I shall continue to keep Congress advised of such occurrences as are worthy the communication.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE COUNT DE GRASSE.

SIR, BEFORE YORK, 1 October, 1781.

I should have had the honor of acknowledging sooner the note, which your Excellency transmitted by the Marquis de Lafayette, but an expectation of being able to accompany my answer with interesting

intelligence induced me to defer it to the present moment. With regard to the station, which your Excellency has determined for the main fleet, the reasons, which you are pleased to communicate, prove that it unites all advantages, and inspire the greatest confidence in the accomplishment of its object.

I have only one proposition to submit to your Excellency on the subject of naval dispositions, and the objects of it are too essential not to be exposed to you in their fullest light. I mean the stationing two or three ships above the enemy's posts on York River. For want of this only means of completing the investment of their works, the British remain masters of the navigation for twenty-five miles distance above them, and have, by their armed vessels, intercepted supplies of the greatest value on their way to our camp. The loss is redoubled, by diminishing our means and augmenting those of the enemy at a most critical time. We are even necessitated, for the protection of Williamsburg and the magazines in our rear, to leave a post of seven or eight hundred men in that quarter; a diminution of our force that in present circumstances we can but illy support. But, unless this detachment is made, the enemy might in the greatest security land above Queen's Creek to cover his left flank, and by a very short march effect the most destructive purposes; while the circuitous march which we, from the nature of the country, should be obliged to make, would render it impossible to arrive in time to prevent or punish him. We are besides reduced to the impossibility of concerting

measures with the corps of troops at Gloucester, being obliged, in order to communicate with them, to make a circuit of near ninety miles, whereas in the other case it would be both easy and expeditious. But what is a still more decisive consideration is, that Lord Cornwallis has, by the York River, an outlet for his retreat, and that he may, by embracing a leading wind and tide and stealing a march, proceed unmolested to West Point, where, upon debarking his troops, he will have the Pamunky on one flank and the Mattapony on the other; and that finally he may, by mounting the greatest part of his men, and successive forced marches, push his way, with a compact, disciplined army, through a country whose population is too scattered to be collected for sudden opposition, and make it impossible for us to overtake him. Many people are of opinion, that Lord Cornwallis will embrace this as the only means of safety; and it is certain, that, unless the investment is completed as above mentioned, he will have it in his power either now or in a last extremity.

The present position of the fleet and army perfectly secures us against every enterprise on the part of the enemy in James River.

Upon the whole, I can assure your Excellency, that this seems to be the only point in which we are defective. The enemy has already abandoned all their exterior works, and withdrawn himself altogether to the body of the place, and given us great advantages for opening the trenches. The engineers have had a near and satisfactory view of the works, without in-

terruption, and we have most to apprehend Lord Cornwallis's escape.

For these reasons I earnestly entreat, that your Excellency will be pleased to authorize and enjoin the commanding officer of the ships in York River, to concert measures with me for the purpose above mentioned. In this case an additional ship may be necessary to remain at the mouth of the river. The Experiment and two frigates, if your Excellency thinks proper, would be best calculated for the station above.

If, upon mature examination of the passage, it should appear too great a risk for the ships, I would at least solicit your Excellency, that the vessels might advance higher up the river, and take a more menacing position with respect to the enemy on our right. But I must confess, to your Excellency, that I am so well satisfied by experience, of the little effect of land batteries on vessels passing them with a leading breeze, that, unless the two channels near York should be found impracticable by obstructions, I should have the greatest confidence in the success of this important service.

Your Excellency's approbation of this measure would supersede the necessity of a defence against fire-ships. But the nature of the river besides renders it physically impossible to form any obstructions of the kind proposed. I entreat your Excellency to accept the sentiments of respectful attachment, with which I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

[1] The attempt to pass up York River was declined by Count de Grasse, not because he thought the works at York and Gloucester would present serious obstacles, but because he believed his large vessels would not be secure in that

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

CAMP, BEFORE YORK, 6 October, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

How happy am I, in at length having it in my power to congratulate you upon a victory as splendid as I hope it will prove important. Fortune must have been coy indeed, had she not yielded at last to so persevering a pursuer as you have been. I hope, now she is yours, that she will change her appellation of fickle to that of constant.

I can say with sincerity, that I feel with the highest degree of pleasure the good effects, which you mention as resulting from the perfect good understanding between you, the Marquis, and myself. I hope it will never be interrupted, and I am sure it never can while we are all influenced by the same pure motive, that of love to our country and interest in the cause in which we are embarked. I have happily had but few differences with those, with whom I have the honor of being connected in the service. With whom, and of what nature these have been, you know. I bore much for the sake of peace and the public good. My conscience tells me, I acted

station. The enemy had a great number of boats and small craft, and with these they could easily bring fire-ships in the night, from which his vessels would be exposed to imminent danger, confined in the narrow channel of a river; especially as he had not in his whole fleet a sufficient number of row-boats and light craft for defence in such a situation, even if they could all be transported up the river in safety. This objection he deemed insuperable, and the project was laid aside. It was revived again, however, a few days afterwards. The passage and the river above York were reconnoitred by a French officer, and, upon his representation, Gount de Grasse agreed to send up some of his vessels, provided General Washington would furnish such a number of row-boats as would protect them from the fire-ships. This was about to be executed when Lord Cornwallis proposed terms of surrender.

rightly in these transactions; and, should they ever come to the knowledge of the world, I trust I shall stand acquitted by it.

The Baron,[1] from the warmth of his temper, had got disagreeably involved with the State, and an inquiry into a part of his conduct must one day take place, both for his own honor and their satisfaction. I have for the present given him a command in this army, which makes him happy. I shall always take pleasure in giving Mrs. Greene's letters a conveyance; and, should she persist in the resolution of undertaking so long a journey, as that from New England to Carolina, I hope she will make Mount Vernon, where Mrs. Knox now is, a stage of more than a day or two. With much esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.[2]

TO DON FRANCISCO RENDON.[3]

HEAD-QUARTERS, BEFORE YORK,
12 October, 1781.

SIR,

I was yesterday honored with your favor of the 2d. It gives me pleasure to find so good a disposition in Don Bernardo de Galvez[4] to concert his operations

[1] Steuben.

[2] "Col. Morris will inform General Greene in the sincerest manner that there are but two motives which can possibly induce Genl. W— to take the command to the southward: one, the order of C— to repair thither; the other, the French army going there. In the last case Count R— would command if Genl. W— did not go in person. General Washington wishes, not only from his personal regard to Genl. Greene, but from principles of generosity and justice, to see him crowned with those laurels which from his unparalleled exertions he so richly deserves."—*Memorandum to Col. Lewis Morris, to be destroyed as soon as he has committed them to memory.* 6 October, 1781.

[3] Agent in the United States from the Spanish government.

[4] Commander of the Spanish forces in Louisiana and Florida.

in such a manner against the common enemy, that the interests of His Catholic Majesty and those of ourselves and our ally may be mutually benefited. You must be sensible, that, in the present political situation of affairs, I cannot, with any degree of propriety, in behalf of the United States propose any joint plan of operations to Don Galvez, though I flatter myself that difficulty will be ere long removed.

Neither can I at this time determine whether we shall be able to act offensively against the enemy in South Carolina and Georgia. That will in great measure depend upon the naval assistance we shall be able to derive from our ally. Of this you may assure Don Galvez, that, should any offensive plan be formed, which is to be undertaken by the allied arms, I will use my influence with the French commanders to give him due notice, should I not be able to open a correspondence with him myself. In the mean time you may inform him, that he cannot make a more powerful diversion in favor of the southern States, than by pushing his arms against East Florida.

I am obliged by the extract of Don Galvez's letter to the Count de Grasse, explaining at large the necessity he was under of granting the terms of capitulation to the garrison of Pensacola, which the commandant required. I have no doubt, from Don Galvez's well known attachment to the cause of America, that he would have refused the articles, which have been deemed exceptionable.
not been very powerful reasons to inc
ance of them. * * *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BEFORE YORK,
12 October, 1781.

SIR,

My last despatch to your Excellency was of the 6th. I then informed you, that we should open trenches on that night.[1] We did so, and established our first parallel within six hundred yards of the enemy's works, with the loss of only one officer of the French artillery wounded, and sixteen privates killed and wounded, the greater part of which were of the French line.

The 7th and 8th we were employed in completing the first parallel, and in erecting batteries somewhat advanced of it. The 9th at 3 o'clock in the afternoon the French Battery on the left, of four 12-pounders, six mortars and Howitzers opened—and at 5 o'clock the American Battery on the right, of six 18- and 24-pounders—two mortars and two Howitzers opened also.

We were informed that our shells did considerable execution in the town, and we could perceive that our shot, which were directed against the enemy's embrasures, injured them much. The 10th, two

[1] [illegible] the 1st instant, we have been employed [illegible] Hill, and in constructing a new in- [illegible] give security to our troops in making [illegible] employed in making fascines and [illegible] cannon, mortars, and stores from Tre- [illegible] we made slow progress, until the [illegible] but, it being the opinion [illegible] commence operations, [illegible] *Washington to the President of Congress*, [illegible]

French batteries, one of ten eighteen and twenty-four pounders, and six mortars and howitzers, the other of four eighteen-pounders, opened, as did two more American batteries, one of four eighteen-pounders, the other of two mortars. The fire now became so excessively heavy, that the enemy withdrew their cannon from their embrasures, placed them behind the merlins, and scarcely fired a shot during the whole day. In the evening the Charon frigate of forty-four guns was set on fire by a hot ball from the French battery on the left, and entirely consumed. Her guns and stores had been taken out. By the report of a deserter, our shells, which were thrown with the utmost degree of precision, did much mischief in the course of the day.

Yesterday morning two of the enemy's transports were fired by hot shot and burnt. This has occasioned them to warp their shipping as far over to the Gloucester shore as possible. We last night advanced our second parallel within three hundred yards of the enemy's works, with little or no annoyance from them. Only one man was killed, and three or four wounded. I shall think it strange indeed, if Lord Cornwallis makes no vigorous exertions in the course of this night, or very soon after.

I cannot but acknowledge the infinite obligations I am under to His Excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, the Marquis St. Simon, commanding the troops from the West Indies, the other general officers, and indeed the officers of every denomination in the French army, for the assistance which

they afford me. The experience of many of those gentlemen, in the business before us, is of the utmost advantage in the present operation. And I am sensible it must give your Excellency and Congress the highest pleasure to know, that the greatest harmony prevails between the two armies. They seem actuated by one spirit, that of supporting the honor of the allied arms, and pushing their approaches with the utmost vigor. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BEFORE YORK,
16 October, 1781.

SIR,

I had the honor to inform your Excellency in my last, of the 12th instant, that we had the evening before opened our second parallel. The 13th and 14th we were employed in completing it.[1] The engineers having deemed the two redoubts on the left of the enemy's line sufficiently injured by our shot and shells to make them practicable, it was determined to carry them by assault on the evening of the 14th. The following disposition was accordingly made. The work on the enemy's extreme left to be attacked by the American light infantry under the command of the Marquis de Lafayette; the other by a detachment of the French grenadiers and

[1] "In doing which we experienced more fire from the enemy than had before been given us, principally from their small shells, which gave us some annoyance, and little loss of life."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 16 October, 1781.

chasseurs, commanded by Major-General the Baron Viomênil. I have the pleasure to inform your Excellency, that we succeeded in both. Nothing could exceed the firmness and bravery of the troops. They advanced under the fire of the enemy without returning a shot, and effected the business by the bayonet only. The reports of his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, copies of which I enclose, enter more particularly into a detail of the mode in which the attacks on the parts of the French and American columns were conducted. We made prisoners in both redoubts, one major, two captains, three subalterns, and sixty-seven privates.

The works, which we have carried, are of vast importance to us. From them we shall enfilade the enemy's whole line, and I am in hopes we shall be able to command the communication from York to Gloucester. I think the batteries of the second parallel will be in sufficient forwardness to begin to play in the course of this day. The enemy last night made a sortie for the first time. They entered one of the French and one of the American batteries on the second parallel, which were unfinished. They had only time to thrust the points of their bayonets into four pieces of the French and two of the American artillery, and break them off; but the spikes were easily extracted. They were repulsed the moment the supporting troops came up, leaving behind them seven or eight dead, and six prisoners. The French had four officers and twelve privates killed and wounded,

and we had one sergeant mortally wounded. I enclose your Excellency a return of the killed and wounded of both armies up to the present time. It is smaller than might have been expected.[1] I have the honor to be, &c.[2]

TO LORD CORNWALLIS.

HEAD QUARTERS, BEFORE YORK,
18 October, 1781.

My Lord,

To avoid unnecessary discussion and delays I shall at once, in answer to your Lordships letters of yesterday, declare the general basis upon which a definitive treaty and capitulation must take place.[3] The garrisons of York and Gloucester, including the seamen, as you propose, will be received Prisoners of War. The condition annexed, of sending the British and

[1] According to this return, as copied from Washington's *Diary*, the Americans had lost twenty killed, and fifty-six wounded; the French, fifty-two killed, and one hundred and thirty-four wounded.

[2] Read in Congress, October 25th. Referred to Randolph, Boudinot, Varnum, and Carroll.

[3] "I do myself the honor to transmit the copy of a letter, which I have just received from Lord Cornwallis. I have informed him in answer thereto, that I wish him, previous to the meeting of the commissioners, to send his proposals in writing to the American lines, for which purpose a cessation of hostilities for two hours will be allowed.

"I should be anxious to have the honor of your Excellency's participation in the treaty, which will according to present appearance shortly take place. I need not add how happy it will make me to welcome your Excellency in the name of America on this shore, and embrace you upon an occasion so advantageous to the interests of the common cause, and on which it is so much indebted to you.

"Should naval reasons deprive me of this happiness, by requiring your Excellency's presence on board, I entreat that you will be pleased to appoint an officer to represent you, and take charge of the capitulation to be signed by your Excellency."—*Washington to Count de Grasse*, 17 October, 1781.

German troops to the parts of Europe to which they respectively belong, is inadmissible. Instead of this they will be marched to such parts of the Country as can most conveniently provide for their subsistence, and the benevolent treatment of Prisoners, which is invariably observed by the Americans, will be extended to them. The same honors will be granted to the surrendering Army as were granted to the Garrison of Charlestown. The shipping and boats in the two harbors, with all their Guns, Stores, Tackling, furniture and apparel, shall be delivered in their present state to an officer of the Navy, appointed to take possession of them.

The Artillery, Arms, Accoutrements, Military Chest, and public stores of every denomination, shall be delivered, unimpaired to the heads of departments to which they respectively belong.

The officers will be indulged in retaining their side arms, and the officers and soldiers may preserve their baggage and effects, with this reserve, that property taken in the Country will be reclaimed.

With regard to the individuals in civil capacities whose interests, your Lordship wishes may be attended to; until they are more particularly described, nothing definitive can be settled.

I have to add that I expect the sick and wounded will be supplied with their own Hospital Stores, and be attended by British Surgeons, particularly charged with the care of them.

Your Lordship will be pleased to signify your determination either to accept or reject the proposals

now offered in the course of two hours from the delivery of this letter that Commissioners may be appointed to digest the articles of capitulation, or a renewal of hostilities may take place. I have the honor, &c.[1]

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR YORK,
19 October, 1781.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform Congress, that a reduction of the British army, under the command of Lord Cornwallis, is most happily effected. The unremitted ardor, which actuated every officer and soldier in the combined army on this occasion, has principally led to this important event, at an earlier period than my most sanguine hopes had induced me to expect.

The singular spirit of emulation, which animated the whole army from the first commencement of our operations, has filled my mind with the highest pleasure and satisfaction, and had given me the happiest presages of success.

On the 17th instant, a letter was received from Lord Cornwallis, proposing a meeting of commission-

[1] "I have the honor, with many congratulations, to inform you that one o'clock this afternoon is appointed for the delivery of two of the enemy's redoubts on the Gloucester side; one to a detachment of French, the other to a detachment of American troops. The garrison is to march out at three o'clock (with shouldered arms, drums beating a British or German march, the cavalry with their swords drawn, and the colors of the whole cased,) to a place which you will be so good as to appoint, in front of the posts, where they will ground their arms, and afterwards return to their encampment. You will be so good as to communicate this to General Weedon, and to make the necessary arrangements, and desire him to take every precaution to prevent the loss or embezzlement of the arms."—*Washington to Brigadier General Choisy*, 19 October, 1781.

ers to consult on terms for the surrender of the posts of York and Gloucester. This letter (the first which had passed between us) opened a correspondence, a copy of which I do myself the honor to enclose; that correspondence was followed by the definitive capitulation, which was agreed to and signed on the 19th, a copy of which is also herewith transmitted, and which, I hope, will meet the approbation of Congress.

I should be wanting in the feelings of gratitude, did I not mention on this occasion, with the warmest sense of acknowledgment, the very cheerful and able assistance, which I have received in the course of our operation from his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau and all his officers of every rank in their respective capacities. Nothing could equal the zeal of our allies, but the emulating spirit of the American officers, whose ardor would not suffer their exertions to be exceeded.

The very uncommon degree of duty and fatigue, which the nature of the service required from the officers of engineers and artillery of both armies, obliges me particularly to mention the obligations I am under to the commanding and other officers of those corps.

I wish it was in my power to express to Congress, how much I feel myself indebted to the Count de Grasse and the officers of the fleet under his command, for the distinguished aid and support which has been afforded by them, between whom and th
army the most happy concurrence of sentim
views has subsisted, and from whom ev

coöperation has been experienced, which the most harmonious intercourse could afford.

Returns of the prisoners, military stores, ordnance, shipping, and other matters, I shall do myself the honor to transmit to Congress, as soon as they can be collected by the heads of the departments to which they belong.

Colonel Laurens and the Viscount de Noailles, on the part of the combined army, were the gentlemen who acted as commissioners for forming and settling the terms of capitulation and surrender, herewith transmitted, to whom I am particularly obliged for their readiness and attention exhibited on the occasion.

Colonel Tilghman, one of my aids-de-camp, will have the honor to deliver these despatches to your Excellency; he will be able to inform you of every minute circumstance, which is not particularly mentioned in my letter. His merits, which are too well known to need any observations at this time, have gained my particular attention, and I could wish that they may be honored by the notice of your Excellency and Congress.

Your Excellency and Congress will be pleased to accept my congratulations on this happy event, and believe me to be, with the highest esteem, &c. Though I am not possessed of the particular returns yet I have reason to suppose that the number of prisoners will be between five and six thousand exclusive of seamen and others.[1]

[1] This letter was referred on the 24th to a committee of Congress (Randolph, Boudinot, Varnum, and Carroll), who reported a series of resolves, which were

TO THE COUNT DE GRASSE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 20 October, 1781.

SIR,

The surrender of York, from which so much glory and advantage are derived to the allies, and the honor of which belongs to your Excellency, has greatly anticipated our most sanguine expectations. Certain of this event, under your auspices, though unable to determine the time, I solicited your attention, in the first conference with which you honored me, to ulterior objects of decisive importance to the common cause. Although your answer on that occasion was unfavorable to my wishes, the unexpected promptness, with which our operations here have been conducted to their final success, having gained us time, the defect of which was one of your Excellency's principal objections, a perspective of the most extensive and happy consequences engage me to renew my representation.

Charleston, the principal maritime port of the British in the southern parts of the continent, the grand deposit and point of support for the present theatre of the war, is open to a combined attack, and might

adopted. The thanks of Congress were voted to General Washington, Count de Rochambeau, and Count de Grasse respectively, and also to all the officers and soldiers. Two stands of colors, taken at Yorktown, were presented to General Washington; two pieces of field-ordnance to Count Rochambeau; and a similar tribute to Count de Grasse. A horse, properly caparisoned, and an elegant sword, were given to Colonel Tilghman, who had been the bearer of the despatches containing the news of the capitulation. It was also resolved that Congress would cause to be erected at Yorktown a marble column, adorned with emblems of the alliance between the United States and France, and inscribed with a succinct narrative of the events of the siege and capitulation.—*Journals*, October 29th.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BEFORE YORK,
12 October, 1781.

SIR,

My last despatch to your Excellency was of the 6th. I then informed you, that we should open trenches on that night.[1] We did so, and established our first parallel within six hundred yards of the enemy's works, with the loss of only one officer of the French artillery wounded, and sixteen privates killed and wounded, the greater part of which were of the French line.

The 7th and 8th we were employed in completing the first parallel, and in erecting batteries somewhat advanced of it. The 9th at 3 o'clock in the afternoon the French Battery on the left, of four 12-pounders, six mortars and Howitzers opened—and at 5 o'clock the American Battery on the right, of six 18- and 24-pounders—two mortars, and two Howitzers opened also.

We were informed, that our shells did considerable execution in the town, and we could perceive that our shot, which were directed against the enemy's embrasures, injured them much. The 10th, two

[1] "Since mine to your Excellency of the 1st instant, we have been employed in repairing the enemy's works upon Pigeon Hill, and in constructing a new intermediate redoubt. These will serve to give security to our troops in making their approaches. We have been assiduously employed in making fascines and gabions, and in transporting our heavy cannon, mortars, and stores from Trebell's Landing, on James River. In the last we made slow progress, until the arrival of the wagons and teams from the northward; but, it being the opinion of the engineers, that we now have a sufficient stock to commence operations, we shall this night open trenches."—*Washington to the President of Congress*, 6 October, 1781.

French batteries, one of ten eighteen and twenty-four pounders, and six mortars and howitzers, the other of four eighteen-pounders, opened, as did two more American batteries, one of four eighteen-pounders, the other of two mortars. The fire now became so excessively heavy, that the enemy withdrew their cannon from their embrasures, placed them behind the merlins, and scarcely fired a shot during the whole day. In the evening the Charon frigate of forty-four guns was set on fire by a hot ball from the French battery on the left, and entirely consumed. Her guns and stores had been taken out. By the report of a deserter, our shells, which were thrown with the utmost degree of precision, did much mischief in the course of the day.

Yesterday morning two of the enemy's transports were fired by hot shot and burnt. This has occasioned them to warp their shipping as far over to the Gloucester shore as possible. We last night advanced our second parallel within three hundred yards of the enemy's works, with little or no annoyance from them. Only one man was killed, and three or four wounded. I shall think it strange indeed, if Lord Cornwallis makes no vigorous exertions in the course of this night, or very soon after.

I cannot but acknowledge the infinite obligations I am under to His Excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, the Marquis St. Simon, commanding the troops from the West Indies, the other general officers, and indeed the officers of every denomination in the French army, for the assistance which

they afford me. The experience of many of those gentlemen, in the business before us, is of the utmost advantage in the present operation. And I am sensible it must give your Excellency and Congress the highest pleasure to know, that the greatest harmony prevails between the two armies. They seem actuated by one spirit, that of supporting the honor of the allied arms, and pushing their approaches with the utmost vigor. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BEFORE YORK,
16 October, 1781.

SIR,

I had the honor to inform your Excellency in my last, of the 12th instant, that we had the evening before opened our second parallel. The 13th and 14th we were employed in completing it.[1] The engineers having deemed the two redoubts on the left of the enemy's line sufficiently injured by our shot and shells to make them practicable, it was determined to carry them by assault on the evening of the 14th. The following disposition was accordingly made. The work on the enemy's extreme left to be attacked by the American light infantry under the command of the Marquis de Lafayette; the other by a detachment of the French grenadiers and

[1] "In doing which we experienced more fire from the enemy than had before been given us, principally from their small shells, which gave us some annoyance, and little loss of life."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 16 October, 1781.

chasseurs, commanded by Major-General the Baron Vioménil. I have the pleasure to inform your Excellency, that we succeeded in both. Nothing could exceed the firmness and bravery of the troops. They advanced under the fire of the enemy without returning a shot, and effected the business by the bayonet only. The reports of his Excellency the Count de Rochambeau, the Marquis de Lafayette, and Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, copies of which I enclose, enter more particularly into a detail of the mode in which the attacks on the parts of the French and American columns were conducted. We made prisoners in both redoubts, one major, two captains, three subalterns, and sixty-seven privates.

The works, which we have carried, are of vast importance to us. From them we shall enfilade the enemy's whole line, and I am in hopes we shall be able to command the communication from York to Gloucester. I think the batteries of the second parallel will be in sufficient forwardness to begin to play in the course of this day. The enemy last night made a sortie for the first time. They entered one of the French and one of the American batteries on the second parallel, which were unfinished. They had only time to thrust the points of their bayonets into four pieces of the French and two of the American artillery, and break them off; but the spikes were easily extracted. They were repulsed the moment the supporting troops came up, leaving behind them seven or eight dead, and six prisoners. The French had four officers and twelve privates killed and wounded,

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, BEFORE YORK,
16 October, 1781.

SIR,

I had the honor to inform your Excellency in my last, of the 12th instant, that we had the evening before opened our second parallel. The 13th and 14th we were employed in completing it.[1] The engineers having deemed the two redoubts on the left of the enemy's line sufficiently injured by our shot and shells to make them practicable, it was determined to carry them by assault on the evening of the 14th. The following disposition was accordingly made. The work on the enemy's extreme left to be attacked by the American light infantry under the command of the Marquis de Lafayette; the other by a detachment of the French grenadiers and

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The works, which we have carried, are of vast importance to us. From them we shall enfilade the enemy's whole line, and I am in hopes we shall be able to command the communication from York to Gloucester. I think the batteries of the second parallel will be in sufficient forwardness to begin to play in the course of this day. The enemy last night made a sortie for the first time. They entered one of the French and one of the American batteries on the second parallel, which were unfinished. They had only time to thrust the points of their bayonets into four pieces of the French and two of the American artillery, and break them off; but the spikes were easily extracted. They were repulsed the moment the supporting troops came up, leaving behind them seven or eight dead, and six prisoners. The French had four officers and twelve privates killed and wounded,

State with his troops for the winter, at any rate six weeks to refresh them. Upon a full consideration of the reasons offered, I flatter myself, that my conduct will stand approved in the judgment of Congress, whose approbation I shall ever be solicitous to obtain.

I enclose, also, for the observation of Congress, a copy of my letter to the ministers of the United States at the courts of Europe, conveying to them the intelligence of our success against the enemy in this State. The reasons for my conduct, as stated in that letter, I must rely upon, as my justification with Congress for the liberty taken in that communication.

Unacquainted with the state of politics between Congress and the courts of Europe respecting future negotiations, whatever our prospects from that quarter may be, I cannot justify myself to my own mind without urging Congress in the warmest terms to make every arrangement that may be found necessary, for an early and efficacious campaign the ensuing year. Arguments, I flatter myself, need not be adduced to impress on Congress the high importance of this idea. Whatever may be the events of the coming winter or ensuing summer, an effectual and early preparation for military operations will put us upon the most respectable footing, either for war or negotiation ; while a relaxation will place us in a disreputable situation in point of peaceful prospects, and will certainly expose us to the most disgraceful disasters, in case of a continuance of the hostile disposition of our enemies. I do myself the pleasure

to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's several letters of the 10th, 13th, and 14th insts., and thank you for the intelligence communicated in them.

Nothing is yet heard of Admiral Digby, with his fleet, near these coasts. Whatever may be his intentions, Count de Grasse, I believe, is ready to meet him.

I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. October 29th. At the moment of closing my despatch, I am favored with the definitive determination of the Count de Grasse respecting the troops I hoped to have transported to Wilmington by water. The Admiral's ideas are communicated in his letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, a copy of which is herewith transmitted.[1] In consequence of this resolution, and having no transports, I am obliged to send on the troops destined for the southern district by land. They will commence their march in a few days, under the command of Major-General St. Clair. The command of the expedition against Wilmington had been committed to the Marquis, upon the contingency of the troops being transported

[1] *Count de Grasse to Lafayette.*—"The more I reflect on the plan which you mentioned to me, the more I see the impossibility of undertaking to transport troops, baggage, artillery, and ammunition. My ulterior operations require my return to an appointed place at a fixed day. That day approaches, and it would be impossible for me to break my engagement voluntarily. The passage from hence to Cape Fear may possibly be accomplished in two days, but it may also require more than fifteen. The debarkation of troops and stores may be attended with delays, and expose me to censure. Besides, it might happen, that, from an obstinate succession of southerly winds, I should be obliged to take the resolution of repairing to my rendezvous. [illegible] necessity of carrying with me, during the [illegible] troops useful to the Continent, of which

by water. On failure of this event, the Marquis does not proceed with the reinforcement. My present despatches being important, I have committed to the care of Colonel Humphreys, one of my aids-de-camp, whom for his attention, fidelity, and good services, I beg leave to recommend to the notice of Congress and your Excellency.[1]

TO THE COUNT DE GRASSE.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 28 October, 1781.

SIR,

Your Excellency did me the honor to mention, in one of your letters, and subsequently in the note transmitted by the Marquis de Lafayette, that, from a desire to serve the United States, your Excellency would enter into engagements for such coöperations the next campaign as should not be incompatible with the orders of your court. This offer is too essential to the interests of the common cause, not to be embraced by me with the greatest eagerness, while

it. Thus, all that I can do, is to promise to escort as well as I can the vessels, that may have troops on board; but it will be impossible for me to remain on the coast beyond the 8th of next month; and even this delay must be repaired on my part by the greatest activity. If you are deficient in the means of embarking or debarking, let us think no more of the measure. But do not attribute my refusal to any thing, but the impossibility of executing a matter that was agreeable to you."—*MS. Letter*, October 26th.

A long letter was likewise written by Count de Grasse to General Washington on the subject, stating the same objections, and expressing his regret that the orders he was bound to follow, and the engagements he had made to be in the West Indies, prevented him from co-operating in this enterprise, which held out the fairest prospects of success.

[1] Read in Congress, November 3d. Referred to Randolph, Boudinot, Varnum, and Carroll.

it claims my warmest acknowledgments for the continuance of your friendly disposition towards America. As it is impossible, at this distance of time, to determine whether it will be most advantageous for the allies to open the campaign with the siege of New York, and thence proceed to that of Charleston, or make Charleston the leading operation, I take the liberty of proposing to your Excellency the following general disposition, as equally applicable to either; namely, that your Excellency would assemble a decisive naval superiority in the Bay of Chesapeake, toward the end of May, from which central position we might easily transport ourselves for a reunion of our means against whichever of the maritime points above mentioned circumstances should render it most advisable to attack first. With your Excellency, I need not insist either upon the indispensable necessity of a maritime force capable of giving you an absolute ascendency in these seas, nor enlarge upon the advantages, which must be derived from anticipating the British in opening the campaign, next to the immediate prosecution of our present successes with the union of superior means now in our power, and which would infallibly terminate the war at one stroke.

The plan, which I have the honor to submit to your Excellency, is that which appears to me most likely to accomplish the great objects of the alliance. Your Excellency will have observed, that, whatever efforts are made by the land armies, the navy must have the casting vote in the present contest. The court of France are convinced of it, and

clared their resolution to give this indispensable succor. The triumphant manner in which your Excellency has maintained the mastery of the American seas, and the glory of the French flag, lead both nations to look to you as the arbiter of the war. Public and private motives make me most ardently wish, that the next campaign may be calculated to crown all your former victories. I entreat your Excellency to be persuaded of my attachment to your glory, and of the sincere friendship with which I shall invariably continue, my dear General, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ST. CLAIR.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

The detachment, of which you will have the command, for the Southward is to consist of the Pensylvania, Maryland, and Virginia Continental Troops. You will march them by the most convenient rout, and in the most expeditious manner, (without fatiguing the Troops,) towards Wilmington in North Carolina, or other Posts in that State; of which you will endeavor to dis-

[1] In his reply Count de Grasse said that he should communicate General Washington's proposal to the French court, and doubted not that every thing in their power would be done to promote his views, and establish American liberty. St. Simon embarked his troops, and the fleet sailed out of the Chesapeake on the 4th of November for the West Indies. General Washington presented to Count de Grasse two horses, which were sent off to the fleet.

The French army remained in Virginia till the following summer. The head-quarters of Count de Rochambeau were at Williamsburg.

"Agreeable to what I informed you some time ago, it has been agitated with the French Admiral to transport by water, under his convoy, as far as Cape Fear, the reinforcement destined for your aid, and on that contingency, it was in contemplation, with these troops, to attempt by coup-de-main, to carry the enemy's post of Wilmington—an attempt which, with the aid of the fleet, was judged to be practicable, and the accomplishment of which, however small the

possess the enemy, if their situation, from the intelligence you shall receive as you advance, shall in your judgment render it practicable and advisable. If it does not, you will continue your march to the Southern army, and put yourself under the command of Majr.-Genl. Greene.

As Wilmington and other places in No. Ca. may c[e]ase to be objects, from a change of circumstances in the States to the southward of this, it will be necessary for you to open an immediate communication by Letter with General Greene, and govern yourself by his advice and orders; and it may be well to communicate, (in confidence,) to the Executive of the State of North Carolina the enterprise against Wilmington, that you may procure such information and aid as it may be in their power to give. For Ordnance and Stores, and for the means of transportation and other matters in the Quarter Master's department, you will consult General Knox and Colonel Pickering, and will make your arrangements with the Commissary, or State agent, for supplies of Provision. Given at Head-Quarters, near York in Virginia, this 29th day of October, 1781.

P. S. If there are any men upon detachment, they are to be called in and marched with their regiments. A sufficient number of officers must be left to carry on the sick and invalids as fast as they recover. Some good field-officers should remain to superintend this business.

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object in itself, would be of great importance in the scale of future negotiation, as it would in effect be the liberation of another state.

"After some days of suspence I have just now received from the Count de Grasse a negative decision upon this proposal; in consequence of which my resolutions are altered, and the troops will go on by land.

"Every argument and persuasion had been used with the French admiral to induce him to aid the combined army in an operation against Charlestown; but the advanced season, the orders of his court, and his own engagements to be punctual to a certain time fixed on for his ulterior operations, all forbid his compliance, and I am obliged to submit. Nothing therefore remains, but to give you a respectable reinforcement, and to return myself to the northward with the remainder of the troops, for which arrangement every preparation is now making with all possible despatch."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 31 October, 1781.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

All the Troops, who are about to return to the northward, will be under your Command ; and I entreat you to use every means in your power to hasten them forward by Land or water, or partly by both, as circumstances may require. The Ordnance, and Stores of every kind, must be despatched, or in such train for it, as to need no further cover or aid from the Troops, 'ere they can move from their prest. Encampment. The Ordnance Vessels, and Vessels carrying stores of every other kind, should receive of sick, Invalids, and weak men, as many as they can transport with safety and convenience ; after which, if there is not water transportation for the remainder, they must be marched by Land, on the Rout the cavalry, teams, &c., came from the Head of Elk to this place.

For the reputation of the Troops, and preservation of property, you will use your utmost exertions to prevent every species of abuse on the march. Destruction of fences is too often among the wanton injuries, which are committed. A few axes, and strict attention of the officers, will infallibly prevent this, and I trust it will be done. You will be able, after informing yourself of the extent of the water transportation, to determine on the number of men, which must march by land, and make your arrangements with the Quarter-Master-General accordingly. If there are any men upon detachment, they are to be called in and marched with their regiments. A sufficient number of officers must be left to carry on the sick and invalids, as fast as they recover. Some good field-officer should remain to superintend this business. Given at Head-Quarters, this 29th day of October, 1781.[1]

[1] The troops were transported by water to the Head of Elk, and they marched thence by land. The New Jersey troops were stationed for the winter near Morristown, and the two New York regiments, under General James Clinton, at Pompton. All the others proceeded to the North River, where the light companies joined their respective regiments. Hazen's regiment was ordered to Lancaster, in Pennsylvania.

The British prisoners were marched to Winchester, in Virginia, and to Fort

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD-QUARTERS, NEAR YORK,
31 October, 1781.

SIR,

I do myself the honor of transmitting to your Excellency a letter from General Duportail, in which he explains the motives of an intended application to Congress for permission to go to France, and for the promotion of himself and other officers of his corps. I should conceal sentiments, with which I am very strongly impressed, and do injustice to very conspicuous merit, if I did not upon the present occasion offer my testimony to the distinguished abilities and services, both of General Duportail and Colonel Gouvion. Their claim to the particular attention of Congress at this juncture is founded upon the practice of Europe; sieges being considered as the particular province of the corps of engineers, and as entitling them, when attended with a success important in itself and its consequences, to the great military rewards. These officers, besides, are supported by a series of conduct in the line of their department, which makes them not depend merely upon the present circumstances.

For these reasons, I am induced to recommend General Duportail's memorial to Congress for the promotions which he specifies, and the leave of ab-

Frederic and Fredericktown, in Maryland. The barracks at Fort Frederic were found to be in such a state of decay that the division of the prisoners intended for that place was stationed at Fredericktown. As these prisoners were guarded only by militia, many differences occurred, and occasionally serious quarrels, between them and the inhabitants; and they were subsequently removed to Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, and guarded by Continental troops.

sence; the latter being by no means incompatible with the good of the service at the present period, as I am reduced, notwithstanding all my efforts, to the necessity of retiring into winter-quarters. The same principles as those above mentioned forbid me to be silent on the subject of General Knox, who is closely united with General Duportail in the merit of the siege; being at the head of the artillery, which is the other principal instrument in conducting attacks. The resources of his genius have supplied, on this and many other interesting occasions, the defect of means. His distinguished talents and services, equally important and indefatigable, entitle him to the same marks of the approbation of Congress, that they may be pleased to grant to the chief engineer. I am, &c.[1]

[1] Read in Congress, November 9th. Referred to Varnum, Montgomery, and Lovell.

Certificate.—"General Duportail, commandant of the corps of engineers, having signified his desire of obtaining leave to go to France for the arrangement of his domestic affairs, it is with the greatest satisfaction I embrace this opportunity of testifying the sense, which I entertain of his distinguished talents and services. His judgment in council and well-conducted valor in the field claim the highest applause, and have secured to him the esteem and confidence of the army. His plan and conduct of the attacks in the late important and successful siege of York, where he commanded the corps of engineers, afford brilliant proofs of his military genius, and set the seal to his reputation; while they entitle him to my warmest thanks. Given at Head-Quarters, 31st October, 1781."

General Duportail was promoted, on the 16th of November, according to the above recommendation, but General Knox was passed over. There was a serious difficulty in the case, owing to the local partiality of some of the members of Congress, and to the opinion of others that general principles should be adhered to. The commission of Knox as brigadier bore a subsequent date to those of James Clinton, Moultrie, and McIntosh. The members from New York, South Carolina, and Georgia would not agree to the promotion of Knox, unless those officers were promoted at the same time; and a vote for the whole

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

MOUNT VERNON, VIRGINIA,
15 November, 1781.

Not till the 5th instant, my dear Marquis, was I able to leave York. Engaged in providing for the detachment that was to go Southerly, embarking the Troops that were to go northerly, making a distribution of the Ordnance and Stores for various purposes, and disposing of the officers and other

could not be carried. Several trials were made, and General Washington was consulted on the subject after his arrival in Philadelphia. Lincoln had, on the 30th of October, been chosen Secretary of War, and to him Washington wrote on December 5th: "From the tenor of your private letter of this date, I presume you are unacquainted with my recommendation of General Knox to Congress, at the time General Duportail was mentioned to that body by me. If my expressions in his favor were not warm and full, they fell as far short of my intention as of his merit, and did injustice to both; because I absolutely refused to recommend the latter without the former, whom I thought equally at least entitled upon every principle to promotion. If any thing further can be done by me, it must, I conceive, be obtained by some other means than a direct application to Congress. In the mean time I hope General Knox will take no hasty resolution, or at least suspend the execution of it, if he should." To Mr. Bee, a delegate from South Carolina, he wrote as follows, on the 8th of March:—

"I am clearly of opinion, for reasons which I had the honor of detailing to you yesterday, that the promotion of General Knox singly will involve fewer disagreeable consequences, than any other method, which I have yet heard proposed; for I am persuaded that no officer, senior to himself, as well acquainted as I am with his extraordinary exertions to prepare without proper means the siege-artillery for the last campaign, the despatch with which he transported it, and his uncommon assiduity and good management of it at Yorktown, would think his promotion an improper reward, or any reflection upon his own merit. If extraordinary exertions do not meet with particular attention, there is no stimulus to action, and an officer has little more to do than to steer clear of courts-martial."

The representations of the Commander-in-chief at last prevailed, and, on the 22d of March, Knox was promoted to the rank of major-general, and his commission was ordered to be dated on the 15th of the preceding November, thereby giving him precedence of General Duportail and advancing him over the above-mentioned brigadiers.—*Sparks.*

prisoners to their respective places of destination, I could not leave that part of ye country sooner.

On that day I arrived at Eltham, (the Seat of Colonel Bassett,) time enough to see poor Mr. Custis breathe his last.[1] This unexpected and affecting event threw Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Custis, who were both present, into such deep distress, that the circumstance of it, and a duty I owed the deceased in assisting at his funeral rites, prevented my reaching this place 'till the 13th; and business here and on the road will put it out of my power to arrive at Philadelphia before the last days of the prest. month.

As this may extend to a later period than your business in that city may require, I owe it to friendship and to my affectionate regard for you, my dear Marqs., not to let you leave this Country, without carrying with you fresh marks of my attachment to you, and new expressions of the high sense I entertain of your military conduct and other important services in the course of the last campaign, altho' the latter are too well known to need the testimony of my approbation, and the former I persuade myself you believe is too well riveted to undergo diminution or change.

As you expressed a desire to know my Sentiments respecting the operations of the next Campaign, before your departure for France, I will without a tedious display of reasoning declare in one word, that the advantages of it to America, and the honor and glory of it to the allied arms in these States must depend *absolutely* upon the naval force, which is employ-

[1] John Parke Custis.

ed in these Seas, and the time of its appearance next year. No land force can act decisively, unless it is accompanied by a maritime superiority; nor can more than negative advantages be expected without it. For proof of this, we have only to recur to the instances of the ease and facility with which the British shifted their ground, as advantages were to be obtained at either extremity of the continent, and to their late heavy loss the moment they failed in their naval superiority. To point out the further advantages, which might have been obtained in the course of this year, if Count de Grasse could have waited, and would have covered a further operation to the southward, is unnecessary; because a doubt did not exist nor does at this moment, in any man's mind, of the total extirpation of the British force in the Carolinas and Georgia, if he could have extended his coöperation two months longer.

It follows then as certain as that night succeeds the day, that without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it every thing honorable and glorious. A constant naval superiority would terminate the war speedily; without it, I do not know that it will ever be terminated honorably. If this force should appear early, we shall have the whole campaign before us. The months of June to September inclusive are well adapted for operating in any of the States to the northward of this; and the remaining months are equally well suited to those south of it; in which time, with such means, I think much, I will add every thing, might be expected.

How far the policy of Congress may carry them towards filling their Continental battalions does not lay with me to determine. This measure, before and since the capitulation, has been strongly recommended by me. Should it be adopted by that body, and executed with energy in the several States, I think our force, (comprehending the auxiliary troops now here,) will be fully competent to all the purposes of the American war, provided the British force on this continent remains nearly as it now is. But as this is a contingency, which depends very much upon political manœuvres in Europe; and, as it is uncertain how far we may be in a state of preparation at the opening of the next Campaign, the propriety of augmenting the present army under the Comd. of Count de Rochambeau is a question worthy of consideration; but, as it lyes with Congress to determine, I shall be silent on the subject.[1]

If I should be deprived of the pleasure of a personal interview with you before your departure, permit me my dear Marquis to adopt this method of making you a tender of my ardent Vows for a propitious

[1] "I shall remain but a few days here [Mount Vernon], and shall proceed to Philadelphia, when I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that Congress, viewing this stroke in too important a point of light, may think our work too nearly closed, and will fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this error, I shall employ every means in my power, and if unhappily we sink into that fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine. Whatever may be the winter politics of European Courts, it is clearly my opinion, that our grand object is to be prepared in every point for war—not that we wish its continuance, but that we may be in the best situation to meet every event."—*Washington to Major-General Greene*, 16 November, 1781.

voyage, a gracious reception from your Prince, an honorable reward of your services, a happy meeting with your lady and friends, and a safe return in the spring to, my dear Marqs., your affectionate friend, &c.

P. S. I beg you to present my best respects to the Viscount de Noailles and let him know that my warmest wishes attend him.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

MOUNT VERNON, 15 November, 1781.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 31st ultimo, covering the resolutions of Congress of 29th, and a proclamation for a day of public prayer and thanksgiving, and have to thank you, Sir, most sincerely for the very polite and affectionate manner in which these enclosures have been conveyed. The success of the combined Armies, against our enemies at York and Gloucester, as it affects the welfare and independence of the United States, I viewed as a most fortunate event. In performing my part towards its accomplishment, I consider myself to have done only my duty, and in the execution of that I ever feel myself happy; and at the same time, as it augurs well to our cause, I take a particular pleasure in acknowledging, that the interposing hand of Heaven, in the various instances of our extensive preparations for this operation, has been most conspicuous and remarkable.

After the receipt of your favor, I received official information through the secretary of Congress, of the new choice of their president. While I congratulate you, Sir, on a release from the fatigues and troubles of so arduous and important a task, I beg you to accept my sincerest thanks for the pleasure and satisfaction, which I have received in the correspondence with which you have honored me, and the many interesting communications of intelligence with which you have favored me. I am, dear Sir, &c.[1]

TO BENJAMIN DULANY.

MOUNT VERNON, 17 November, 1781.

SIR,

I learn from Mr. Lund Washington, that the land formerly belonging to Mr. Manley[2] is again about to be offered for sale, and that you and I are like to be the only competitors in the purchase of it. That I often treated with Mr. Manley in his lifetime, and since his death with his executors for that tract is a fact which cannot be unknown to you; equally true is it, that if the Land is exposed to public sale, I shall bid for it, as far as *I* think it is worth, but no farther, and as men set different values upon the same thing according to the lights in which it strikes them, and their own mode of estimating its value, it is not

[1] President McKean, being Chief-Justice of the State of Pennsylvania, was obliged to retire from Congress for a time to attend to the duties of that office. Mr. John Hanson, of Maryland, was chosen to succeed him as President of Congress on the 5th of November.

[2] Harrison Manley.

at all unlikely but that you may be the purchaser. In the present case, however, I ever was, and still am willing to give the full value of the land; and as a proof of it, should have no objection to the price being fixed by three honest and judicious men, to be indifferently chosen. This I wou'd give.

Having premised this thing, the intention of this letter is to make you a proposition, and explain my motives for it; which, if acceded to, may smooth every difficulty, and prove convenient and beneficial to all parties. It is to purchase the reversion of your land in this neck, at the same time I make that of Mr. Manley's, if it is for sale. You are, doubtless, well acquainted with the circumstance of this tract, held by Mrs. French; but as no man can have a more perfect knowledge of it than I have, I think myself fully warranted in asserting that in less than ten years from this date, there will be no support to the plantation, and that without the aid of my woodland, it cannot be maintained.

If my reasons are asked, I will add: that, to say nothing of the Plantation itself, great part of which is old and much worn, the present fencing cannot last long; that one half of the plantation at this moment is dependent upon me, for the means of enclosing it; that though I have not a disposition to be unneighborly, by depriving Mrs. French, or you, of the use of my fences, yet this may not be the case with those who follow me; that the woodland for fire and timber, bears no proportion to the quantity of cleared land: and, as has been observed before, will not sup-

port the plantation in these articles but a few years longer, especially if all those long lines of fencing which are furnished by me, should be shifted, as is very commonly the case where fields are changed; and, that to depend upon the fencing of another for inclosures, is working land upon a very uncertain tenure, and at too great a hazard to be warranted by prudence; as ill-nature, or even necessity may expose the crops.

That these are facts uncontrovertible, and the reasoning upon them conclusive, none can deny. I mention them to prove, first, that at the same time I discover an inclination to purchase the reversion of your land, I know what value to set on it; and secondly, as an indisputable evidence that sooner or later (if you cannot get some of my woodland) you will, for want of timber and firing, be obliged to part with it to those who have it. And that this must be done to a very great disadvantage, when the period of that necessity is absolutely felt, and the land is more exhausted, is evident to common sense.

It may be asked, why, under these disadvantages, I would choose to be the purchaser? The answer is plain, and I shall candidly give it to you: For besides having timber to supply all the wants of your land, it is my wish, altho' it shou'd not fall into my hands immediately, to have in expectation, by reversion, all the lands in this Neck, that I may without loss of time, proceed to the enclosing of it by a large ditch, and strong post rail fence on the outer boundary of it. This, Sir, and the prospect of having the exclusive possession of the whole neck, I declare to you

upon my honor, are my motives for buying. It is not the real want of land (for I have already more than I have hands to work) nor the extraordinary value of this tract that prompts me to the measure. From a full conviction that I cannot in the course of nature, remain long upon this theater, I have a desire to see such things as are within my reach, accomplished as soon as possible. On this principle it is, I shall go as far to purchase Mr. Manley's land as I can conceive it is worth. If the prospect of long life was before me, and I had a mind to play the politician, it would be my interest to let Mr. Manley's land fall into your hands without a single bid for it on my part; because having a scarcity of fencing yourself, and his land, I believe, not a stick of timber upon it, it would so much increase the demand upon the little you have, as to involve at an earlier period, the consequence I have foretold.

Having dealt thus freely and frankly in describing the true situation and circumstances of these lands, and my motives to purchase them, I shall conclude with repeating that I will take the land of Mr. Manley at the price any three honest and judicious men, indifferently chosen, shall fix upon it. That I will do the same thing with respect to yours, if you incline to sell, or if you will fix the price yourself (having a just regard to the quality and circumstances of the land) I will give it, without haggling; an allowance being made by men of judgment, conversant in these things for Mrs. French's life, if she chooses to hold it.

I shall offer no apology for making you these proposals. My meaning is good, and my offers are generous. They will stand the test of examination; and it is my wish, that all the parties concerned (vizt. Mrs. Dulany, Mrs. French, and Mr. Triplet, executor of Mr. Manley) may be consulted. If my proposals and observations are good, they will be struck with the force of them; if they are not, my mistake arises from viewing things in a wrong point of view.

I persuade myself that there is too much liberality in your way of thinking to suppose, that because I have frankly declared my motives for making these proposals, and have made generous offers towards purchasing your land, that I shall set no bounds to my prices, in order to obtain it. I as frankly declare, that this is not my intention. I will give the full value, but no more. The whole tenor of my conduct hitherto in this business must have evinced this, and will more than probably convince Mr. Barry (or rather Mr. Wren his oracle) who was ever afraid to accept the price that was offered for his land, lest more could be had,—of the folly and impolicy of a narrow way of thinking, and give him cause, if I should withhold the same offer in future, to accompany it with repentance. I am &c.[1]

[1] Although the offer appears to have been accepted, and three gentlemen appointed as arbitrators, it was not until January, 1787, that I find a transfer to Washington by William Triplet, executor of Harrison Manley, of 142 acres, purchased at £3 the acre. In January, 1786, Dulany became a tenant of Washington, but Washington paid to Mrs. Penl. French, in the year 1787, a rent of £136 for her plantation and negroes, and the same rental was paid in 1788, 1789, and 1790.

TO GEORGE PLATER, PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, AND THOMAS COCKEY DEY, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, OF MARYLAND.

ANNAPOLIS, 22 November, 1781.

GENTLEMEN :

I very sensibly feel the honor, which has this day been conferred upon me by the vote of thanks of so respectable a body, as that of the General Assembly of the State of Maryland. The regard, which they have been pleased to express for me personally, the delicate manner in which they have recalled to view those distant events, which in some degree led to our present happy situation, and the general approbation, which they have generously bestowed, upon the whole of my conduct, must ever secure to them my warmest esteem, and must at the same time operate as fresh incentives to merit their future good opinion.

It is with the highest degree of pleasure I observe, that a proper allowance has been made for the capital share, which the land and sea forces of our great and good ally had in the reduction of the common enemy at York in Virginia. I should deem myself unpardonable, were I not upon every occasion, more especially upon such a one as the present, to declare, that to the sound counsels and vigorous exertions of their Excellencies Count de Rochambeau and Count de Grasse much, very much, was owing.

While I agree in sentiment with the honorable bodies over which you preside, that we may entertain a rational ground of belief, that, under the favor of Divine Providence, the freedom, independence, and happiness of America will shortly be established upon the surest foundation, I think it a duty incumbent upon me to observe, that those most desirable objects are not to be fully attained but by a continuance of those exertions, which have already so greatly humbled the power of our inveterate enemies. Relaxation upon our part will give them time to recollect and recover themselves ereas a vigorous prosecution of the war must inevitably cr remaining force in these States, or put them to the of entirely withdrawing themselves.

I cannot conclude without expressing my warmest wishes for the prosperity of a State, which has ever stood among the foremost in her support of the common cause. I confess myself under particular obligations for the ready attention, which I have ever experienced to those requisitions, which, in the course of my duty, I have occasionally been under the necessity of making. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

PHILADELPHIA, 28 November, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge your favor of the 6th instant, and to thank your Excellency with great sincerity for the very cordial and affectionate congratulations, which you are pleased to express on our late success in Virginia.

I most earnestly hope, that this event may be productive of the happy consequences you mention; and I think that its good effects cannot fail to be very extensive, unless, from a mistaken idea of the magnitude of this success, unhappily a spirit of remissness should seize the minds of the States, and they should

[1] General Washington arrived in Philadelphia on the 27th of November, and the next day he attended Congress, being introduced into the hall by two members. He was addressed by the president as follows.

"Sir: Congress, at all times happy in seeing your Excellency, feel particular pleasure in your presence at this time, after the glorious success of the allied arms in Virginia. It is their fixed purpose to draw every advantage from it, by exhorting the States in the strongest terms to the most vigorous and timely exertions. A committee has accordingly been appointed to state the requisitions necessary to be made for the establishment of the army, and they are instructed to confer with you upon that subject. It is, therefore, the expectation of Congress, that your Excellency would remain for some time in Philadelphia, that they may avail themselves of your aid in this important

set themselves down in quiet with a delusive hope of the contest being brought to a close. I hope this may not be the case. To prevent so great an evil shall be my study and endeavor; and I cannot but flatter myself, that the States, rather than relax in their exertions, will be stimulated to the most vigorous preparations for another active, glorious, and decisive campaign, which, if properly prosecuted will, I trust, under the smiles of Heaven, lead us to the end of this long and tedious war, and set us down in the full security of the great object of our toils, the establishment of peace, liberty, and independence.

Whatever may be the policy of European courts during this winter, their negotiation will prove too precarious a dependence for us to trust to. Our wisdom should dictate a serious preparation for war, and in that state we shall find ourselves in a situation secure against every event. * * *

business, and that you may enjoy a respite from the fatigues of war, as far as is consistent with the service."

To this address General Washington replied;

"Mr. President: I feel very sensibly the favorable declaration of Congress expressed by your Excellency. This fresh proof of their approbation cannot fail of making a deep impression upon me; and my study shall be to deserve a continuance of it. It is with peculiar pleasure I hear, that it is the fixed purpose of Congress to exhort the States to the most vigorous and timely exertions. A compliance on their part will, I persuade myself, be productive of the most happy consequences. I shall yield a ready obedience to the expectation of Congress, and give every assistance in my power to their committee. I am obliged by the goodness of Congress in making my personal ease and convenience a part of their concern. Should the service require my attendance with the army upon the North River, or elsewhere, I shall repair to whatever place my duty calls, with the same pleasure that I remain in this city."

TO JAMES McHENRY.

PHILADELPHIA, 11 December, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 3d Inst. inclosing your Resignation which I have delivered in to the Secy. at War. I am convinced your transition from the Military to the Civil Line will be attended with good consequences, as you will be able to communicate that kind of information to the Body of which you are now a member, which they often stand in need of in times like the present—and as you seem of opinion that my sentiments on public affairs will give weight to your endeavors, I with great pleasure open a correspondence on that subject.

You know it is an old and true Maxim that to make a good peace, you ought to be well prepared to carry on the War. This, the sentiment of our Ally, is not only strongly pressed upon Congress by his Minister here, but by the Gentlemen at the heads of our three great departments—Finance, Foreign Affairs and War. My stay in Town is merely to assist in and forward the several arrangements which are upon the carpet, and I believe you are sufficiently acquainted with me to suppose that I do not fail to urge vigorous measures. I am happy in finding no want of disposition in Congress to adopt the measures recommended by their Committees and their executive officers—The requisitions which they have made and which they will shortly make upon the States will evince this—It will afterwards lay with the States to determine whether we are, early in the next Cam-

paign, to take advantage of what we have gained this, or whether we are as usual to suffer the enemy to bring their reinforcements from Europe before we draw ours from the neighborhood of the army as it were.

I need not say more to you at this time—indeed I hope you will have no occasion to make use of the hints I have given—For I have the highest opinion of the good will and Vigor of your Legislature.

I am &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

My Dear Sir, Philadelphia, 15 December, 1781.

I have successively received your favors of the 30th of October and 2d and 21st of November.

I thank you for your kind congratulations on an event, which is certainly most important, considered in a public view, and which adds to my personal satisfaction, by finding that it in some degree relieves you from that load of difficulty and distress, with which you had so long been contending. The evacuation of the State of North Carolina is another very fortunate circumstance.[1]

I presented your recommendation of Colonel Williams to Congress, backed by my own ; the expediency of filling up the vacant brigadierships is among other matters now under consideration ; and, if thought proper at this time, there is no doubt of Colonel Williams being promoted.[2]

[1] The British had recently retired from Wilmington.

[2] As General Smallwood had been promoted to the rank of major-general, Colonel Otho H. Williams was recommended by General Greene to supply his place as brigadier in the Maryland line.

I hope General St. Clair has before or by this time joined you. The enemy have sent no reinforcement from New York to Charleston, nor do I learn that any preparations are making for such a measure. If it should be the opinion, that the British force in South Carolina is adequate to the maintenance of Charleston, I should not be surprised, if Sir Henry Clinton was to content himself with acting upon the defensive in that quarter, at least until the pleasure of the ministry can be known; because an additional force, sufficient to regain and make establishments in the country, is more than can well be spared from New York. I am informed, the English prints of a late date speak of a reinforcement preparing from thence for Carolina and Florida; and I think it not at all improbable, for I fancy Lord Cornwallis's private despatches, after the battle of Guilford, painted his affairs in no very favorable light.

I am apprehensive that the States, elated by the late success, and taking it for granted that Great Britain will no longer support so losing a contest, will relax in their preparations for the next campaign. I am detained here by Congress to assist in the arrangements for the next year; and I shall not fail, in conjunction with the financier, minister for foreign affairs, and secretary of war, who are all most heartily well disposed, to impress upon Congress, and get them to impress upon the respective States, the necessity of the most vigorous exertions. I am sorry that Major Hyrne's indisposition has prevented the transmission of the lists of prisoners, as the Com-

missary General who is now at Elizabethtown negotiating an exchange may find himself at a loss for want of them. He is proceeding upon a return which Genl. Moultrie furnished and which I believe was taken from Major Hyrne's books. Should it appear that any characters have been omitted, it can easily be rectified as we shall have a considerable balance of officers remaining in our hands.

I really know not what to say on the subject of retaliation. Congress have it under consideration, and we must await their determination. Of this I am convinced, that of all laws it is the most difficult to execute, where you have not the transgressor himself in your possession. Humanity will ever interfere and plead strongly against the sacrifice of an innocent person for the guilt of another; and, as to destruction of property within the enemy's lines, it is in fact destroying our own. It will be to the eternal disgrace of the nation, which drives us to the disagreeable necessity of thinking of means to curb their barbarity.[1] I am with the warmest sentiments of esteem, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA, 27 December, 1781.

SIR,

I have been honored with the resolve of the 20th instant, directing me to make inquiry into the powers and conduct of the Board of Directors to the Asso-

[1] On these topics General Greene had written: "Before an exchange is gone fully into I wish something decisive may be done respecting Colonel Hayne.

ciated Loyalists in New York.[1] I shall pursue such steps as will be most likely to promote the ends which Congress have in view.

I have taken the liberty of enclosing the copies of two letters of the 23d and 24th instant from the commissary-general of prisoners, setting forth the debt, which is due from us on account of naval prisoners, the number remaining in captivity, their miserable situation, and the little probability there is of procuring their release for want of proper subjects in our hands.

Before we proceed to an inquiry into the measures, which ought to be adopted to enable us to pay off our debt, and to effect the exchange of those, who still remain in captivity, a matter which it may take up some time to determine, humanity and policy point out the necessity of administering to the pressing wants of a number of the most valuable subjects of the republic. Had they been taken in Continental

As retaliation necessarily involves the whole Continent, I wish your Excellency's order and the order of Congress thereon. The latter have signified their approbation of the measures I took. But, as retaliation did not take place immediately, nor did I think myself at liberty to act on a matter of such magnitude but from the most pressing necessity, and as the enemy did not repeat the offence, I have been at a loss how to act with respect to the original one, not having any officer of equal rank with Colonel Hayne in my possession. I am ready to execute whatever may be thought advisable. It would be happy for America, if something could be done to put a stop to the practice of burning, both in the northern States and here also; and, to prevent it here, I wrote to the enemy a letter on the subject, a copy of which I enclose; and if they do not desist, I will put the war on the footing I mention.' —*MS. Letter*, November 21st.

[1] This board was established to superintend the affairs of the Refugees, or Loyalists. William Franklin, formerly governor of New Jersey, was its president.

service, I should have thought myself authorized, in conjunction with the minister of war, to have applied a remedy; but as the greater part of them were not thus taken, as appears by Mr. Skinner's representation, I must await the decision of Congress upon the subject. Had a system, some time past planned by Congress and recommended to the several States, been adopted and carried fully into execution, I mean that of obliging all captains of private vessels to deliver over their prisoners to the Continental commissaries upon certain conditions, I am persuaded that the numbers taken and brought into the many ports of the United States would have amounted to a sufficiency to have exchanged those taken from us; but, instead of that, it is to be feared, that few in proportion are secured, and that the few, which are sent in, are so partially applied, that it creates great disgust in those remaining. The consequence of which is, that, conceiving themselves neglected and seeing no prospect of relief, many of them enter into the enemy's service, to the very great injury of our trading interest. Congress will, therefore, I hope, see the necessity of renewing their former or making some similar recommendation to the States.

In addition to the motives above mentioned, for wishing that the whole business of prisoners of war might be brought under one general regulation, is another of no small consideration, which is, that it would probably put a stop to those mutual complaints of ill treatment, which are frequently urged on either

part. For it is a fact, that, for about two years, we have had no reason to complain of the treatment of the Continental land prisoners in New York, neither have we been charged with any improper conduct towards those in our hands. I consider the sufferings of the seamen for some time past, as arising in a great measure from the want of that general regulation, which has been spoken of, and without which there will constantly be a great number remaining in the hands of the enemy. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO THOMAS CHITTENDEN, VERMONT.[2]

PHILADELPHIA, 1 January, 1782.

SIR,

I received your favor of the 14th of November, by Mr. Brownson. You cannot be at a loss to know why I have not heretofore, and why I cannot now, address you in your public character, or answer you in mine; but the confidence, which you have been pleased to repose in me, gives me an opportunity of offering you my sentiments, as an individual wishing most ardently to see the peace and union of his country preserved, and the just rights of the people of every part of it fully and firmly established.

It is not my business, neither do I think it necessary now, to discuss the origin of the right of a number of inhabitants to that tract of country, formerly

[1] Read in Congress, December 28th. Referred to Clymer, Carroll, and Law.

[2] Mr. Chittenden had been chosen Governor of Vermont by the people of that territory, in February, 1778, and he acted as such during the Revolution.

distinguished by the name of the New Hampshire Grants, and now known by that of Vermont. I will take it for granted, that their right was good, because Congress by their resolve of the 7th of August imply it, and by that of the 21st are willing fully to confirm it, provided the new State is confined to certain described bounds. It appears therefore to me, that the dispute of boundary is the only one which exists, and that, this being removed, all further difficulties would be removed also, and the matter terminated to the satisfaction of all parties. Now, I would ask you candidly whether the claim of the people of Vermont was not for a long time confined solely, or very nearly, to that tract of country which is described in the resolve of Congress of the 21st of August last, and whether, agreeably to the tenor of your own letter to me, the late extension of your claim upon New Hampshire and New York was not more of a political manœuvre, than one in which you conceived yourselves justifiable. If my first question be answered in the affirmative, it certainly bars your new claim; and, if my second be well founded, your end is answered and you have nothing to do but withdraw your jurisdiction to your old limits, and obtain an acknowledgment of independence and sovereignty, under the resolve of the 21st of August, for so much territory as does not interfere with the ancient established bounds of New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. I persuade myself you will see and acquiesce in the reason, the justice, and indeed the necessity of such a decision.

You must consider, Sir, that the point now in dispute is of the utmost political importance to the future union and peace of this great country. The State of Vermont, if acknowledged, will be the first new one admitted into the confederacy, and, if suffered to encroach upon the ancient established boundaries of the adjacent ones, will serve as a precedent for others, which it may hereafter be expedient to set off, to make the same unjustifiable demands. Thus, in my private opinion, while it behoves the delegates of the States now confederated to do ample justice to a body of people sufficiently respectable by their numbers, and entitled by other claims to be admitted into that confederation, it becomes them also to attend to the interests of their constituents, and see, that, under the appearance of justice to one, they do not materially injure the rights of others. I am apt to think this is the prevailing opinion of Congress, and that your late extension of claim has, upon the principles I have above mentioned, rather diminished than increased the number of your friends, and that, if such extension should be persisted in, it will be made a common cause, and not considered as only affecting the rights of the States immediately interested in the loss of territory, a loss of too serious a nature not to claim the attention of any people.

There is no calamity within the compass of my foresight, which is more to be dreaded, than a necessity of coercion on the part of Congress; and consequently every endeavor should be used to prevent the

execution of so disagreeable a measure. It must involve the ruin of that State against which the resentment of the others is pointed.

I will only add a few words upon the subject of the negotiations, which have been carried on between you and the enemy in Canada and in New York. I will take it for granted, as you assert it, that they were so far innocent, that there never was any serious intention of joining Great Britain in their attempts to subjugate your country; but it has had this certain bad tendency; it has served to give some ground to that delusive opinion of the enemy, upon which they in a great measure found their hopes of success, that they have numerous friends among us, who only want a proper opportunity to show themselves openly, and that internal disputes and feuds will soon break us in pieces; at the same time the seeds of distrust and jealousy are scattered among ourselves by a conduct of this kind. If you are sincere in your professions, these will be additional motives for accepting the terms, which have been offered, and which appear to me equitable, and thereby convincing the common enemy, that all their expectations of disunion are

[1] "I was induced to take the matter up just now from an apprehension that things might be carried to extremes, and from having received lately a very confidential letter from him, in which he discloses all their political manœuvres, which he protests have been in reality innocent and only meant to alarm the other states. This letter I have shewn to a number of my friends, members of Congress and others, and they have advised me to write to Mr. Chittenden, in my private character, give him my opinion of the unjustifiableness of the extension of their claim, and advise him to accept the terms offered by the resolve of the 21st of last August. This I have done fully and forcibly, and perhaps it may have some effect upon Mr. Chittenden and the leaders in Vermont."—*Washington to Major-General Schuyler*, 8 January, 1782.

vain, and that they have been worsted in the use of their own weapon,—deception.[1]

As you unbosomed yourself to me, I thought I had the greater right of speaking my sentiments openly and candidly to you. I have done so; and if they should produce the effects, which I most sincerely wish, that of an honorable and amicable adjustment of a matter, which, if carried to hostile lengths, may destroy the future happiness of my country, I shall have attained my end, while the enemy will be defeated in theirs. Believe me to be, with great respect, Sir, &c.[2]

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE, AT PARIS.

PHILADELPHIA, 4 January, 1782.

MY DEAR MARQS.,

I cannot suffer Colonel Gimat to leave this city for France without a remembrance from me to you. I have remained at this place ever since you left it, and am happy in having discovered the best disposition imaginable in Congress to prepare vigorously for

[1] "I am in possession of a deal of intelligence similar to that furnished by Capt. Edgar, and am at a loss to know whether the Vermontese are playing a merely political or a guilty game. I have reason to think the former. I am now endeavoring to get all our prisoners in Canada exchanged, and if any of them, after they are released, can throw light upon a number of transactions, which I confess are mysterious, they will be made use of for that purpose."—*Washington to Major-General Heath*, 15 December, 1781.

[2] "Every information tending to prove, that the affairs respecting the Grants may be speedily and happily accommodated, gives me singular satisfaction. I will flatter myself, that both the articles of intelligence you have received are well grounded, and that it will be the unremitting effort of every one, who is well effected to the general cause, to prevent the horrors of civil discord in any part of the United States. It has been intimated, that some of the enemy's

another campaign. They have resolved to keep up the same number of corps as constituted the army of last year, and have urged the States warmly to compleat them. Requisitions of money are also made; but how far the abilities and inclinations of the States individual to tax heavily to coincide with the views of Congress, is more than I am able, at this early period, to inform you. A further pecuniary aid from your generous nation, and a decisive naval force upon this coast, in the latter end of May or beginning of June, unlimited in its stay and operations, would, unless the resources of Great Britain are inexhaustible, or she can form powerful alliances, bid fair to finish the war in the course of next campaign, with the Ruin of that People.

The first, that is an aid of money, would enable our Financier to support the expenses of the war with ease and credit, without anticipating or deranging those funds, which Congress are endeavoring to establish, and which will be productive, though they may be slow in the establishment. The second, a naval superiority, would compel the enemy to draw their whole force to a point, which would not only disgrace their arms by the relinquishmt. of Posts and the States which they affect to have conquer'd, but might eventually be fatal to their army; or, by at-

shipping and armed vessels have been detained by the ice in Lake Champlain in such a manner, that they might be destroyed and the cannon &c. brought off. If the fact is so, I will thank you for as early and explicit information as possible, that measures may be taken accordingly. The destruction of those vessels would, I think, greatly impede any future incursions from that quarter."—*Washington to Philip Schuyler*, 29 January, 1782.

tempting to hold these posts, might be cut off in detail; so that, in either case, the most important good consequences would result from the measure.

General Lincoln has accepted his appointment of secretary at war. Proper plans of œconomy are adopting in every department, and I do not despair of seeing ere long our affairs under much better management than they have been; which will open a new field productive, it is to be hoped, of a fruitful harvest. As you will have received, in a more direct channel than from hence, the news of the surprise and recapture of St. Eustatia by the arms of France, I shall only congratulate you on the Event, and add, that it marks in a striking point of view the genius of the Marquis de Boullie for Enterprise, and for intrepidity and resources in difficult circumstances. His conduct upon this occasion does him infinite honor.

I shall be impatient to hear of your safe arrival in France, and to receive such communications as *you know* will be interesting to the cause we espouse, and in which we are actors. Though unknown to Madame Lafayette, I beg you to present me to her as one of her greatest admirers. Be so good also as to make a tender of my best wishes to Duke de Lauzun, and other gentlemen of the army of Count de Rochambeau, who may be in the circle of your friends, and with whom I have the honor of an acquaintance. With sentiments of purest affection and most perfect regard, I am, my dear Marquis, your assured friend, &c.

P. S.—*Jany. 5th.* Since writing the foregoing, I have had the letter and resolves, herewith sent, put into my hands by the Delegates of Virginia in Congress. I have a peculiar pleasure in becoming the channel through which the just and grateful plaudits of my native State are communicated to the man I love.

By advices just received from South Carolina, the Enemy have evacuated all their Posts in that State, and have concentred their whole Force in Charlestown. Wilmington is also evacuated, and North Carolina is freed from its enemys. The disaffected part of the State are suing for mercy, and executing, it is said, some of their own leaders for having misguided them.

TO COLONEL CHRISTIAN FEBIGER.

PHILADELPHIA, 12 January, 1782.

SIR,

I was much surprised, on receiving a letter from Genl. St. Clair dated at Taylor's ferry on the 26th of November, to find, that instead of being joined by a detachment of the Virginia line, he had received a letter from you inclosing a representation from the officers assembled at Cumberland Court, amounting to a positive refusal to march except certain terms were complied with by the State[1]—The impropriety of such conduct, to give it no harsher name, is so glaring, that I am in hopes the Gentlemen will upon

[1] This representation is printed in the *Calendar of Virginia State Papers*, II., 609.

cool reflection condemn it themselves—What can they expect from their soldiers, when they themselves strike at the Root of Authority and discipline? That they have reason to complain, in common with their Brethren, of the hardship they have endured, and the difficulties they labor under for want of their pay, I am ready to allow; but they are mistaken if they think they are the only sufferers. There are Corps in the Army belonging to no particular States, the officers and men of which have derived no assistance from any quarter—Some States may have done more than others for their Troops, but of this I am confident, that all are yet much in arrears in fact, as the principal satisfaction that has been made, has been a liquidation of accounts and Certificates granted for the amount due.

There is one reason urged in the representation which I am sorry to see given by officers and those too of my own Country, that they look upon our Independence as established, and that therefore their quitting the service can be no public disadvantage. Do they think the remaining force of the enemy is to be crushed by Words or Blows. I should suppose by the former, or they would never have started an Idea not only ridiculous but of dangerous tendency.

While I think it my duty severely to censure the conduct alluded to, I think I am bound to endeavor to obtain reasonable redress. I have for that purpose written to His Excellency the Governor and have requested him to use every exertion, so to provide for and equip the detachment which is ready, that

both officers and men may be enabled to go upon service with some tolerable degree of comfort. This I hope he will do—after which I expect and insist, in the most positive manner, that the detachment shall march. The officers must and do very well know that it is not in the power of the State to pay them up in good money. If therefore they continue to make that a plea, I shall take it for granted that disinclination to the service upon which they are going is the real motive—I shall be very anxious to hear from you on this subject—for you must suppose my feelings are particularly wounded on the occasion. When asked whether any and what reinforcements have marched from Virginia, I shall blush when I say none, and more so when I assign the cause. I am, &c.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE STATES.

PHILADELPHIA, 22 January, 1782.

SIR,

Although it may be somewhat out of my province, to address your Excellency on a subject, not immediately of a military nature, yet, I consider it so nearly connected with, and so essential to the operations under my direction, that I flatter myself, my interference will not be deemed impertinent.

Upon applying to the superintendent of finance, to know how far I might depend upon him for the pay, feeding, and clothing of the army, for the current year, and for the sums necessary to put it and keep it in motion, he very candidly laid open to me the state of our moneyed affairs, and convinced me, that although the assistances we had derived from abroad were considerable, yet they would be by no means adequate to our expenses. He informed me further, that to make up this deficiency, the st had been called upon, by Congress, for eight millions of

for the service of the year 1782, and shewed me the copy of a circular letter from himself to the several legislatures, in which he had so fully and clearly pointed out the necessity of a compliance with the requisitions that it is needless for me to say more on that head than that I entirely concur with him in opinion, so far as he has gone into the matter. But there are other reasons which could not be so well known to him, as they are to me, as having come under my immediate observation, and which, therefore, I shall take the liberty to mention.

Your excellency cannot but remember the ferment into which the whole army was thrown, twelve months ago, for the want of pay and a regular supply of clothing and provisions, and with how much difficulty they were brought into temper, by a partial supply of the two first, and a promise of more regular supplies of all in future. Those promises the soldiery now begin to claim, and although we shall be able to satisfy them tolerably in respect to clothing, and perfectly in regard to provisions, (if the financier is enabled to comply with his contracts,) yet there is no prospect of obtaining pay until part of the money required of the states can be brought into the treasury.

You cannot conceive the uneasiness which arises from the total want of so essential an article as money, and the real difficulties in which the officers in particular, are involved on that account. The favorable aspect of our affairs, and the hopes that matters are in a train to afford them relief contribute to keep them quiet; but I cannot answer for the effects of a disappointment.

Enabling the financier to comply with his contracts, is a matter of the utmost consequence—the very existence of the army depends upon it. Should he fail in his payments, the contract ceases, and there is no alternative left, but to disband, or live upon the seizure of the neighboring property. The saving to the public by feeding an army by contract is too well known to need any illustration, and that alone ought to be sufficient inducement to the states, to find the means of adhering to it.

It will, perhaps, be urged that the sum called for is immense, and beyond the ability of the country to pay. There is one plain answer to that objection, should it be made—It is, that if the war is carried on, a certain expense must be incurred, and that such expense must be drawn from the people, either by a

partial, cruel, and I may say illegal seizure of that property which lays most convenient to the army, or by a regular and equitable tax in money or specific articles.

Money, if it can be procured, is to be preferred, because it is neither liable to waste, nor is it expensive in the mode of collection or transportation. Whereas, I think I may venture to say that a great proportion of the specific articles have been wasted after the people have furnished them, and that the transportation alone, of what have reached the army, has, in numberless instances, cost more than the value of the articles themselves.

To bring this war to a speedy and happy conclusion, must be the fervent wish of every lover of his country, and sure I am, that no means are so likely to effect these, as vigorous preparations for another campaign. Whether then we consult our true interest, substantial economy, or sound policy, we shall find, that relaxation and languor are, of all things, to be avoided. Conduct of that kind, on our part, will produce fresh hopes and new exertions on that of the enemy; whereby the war which has already held beyond the general expectation, may be protracted to such a length, that the people, groaning under the burthen of it, and despairing of success, may think any change, a change to the better.

I will close with a request, that your Excellency will be good enough to take the first opportunity of laying these, my sentiments, before the legislature of your state. From the attention they have ever been pleased to pay to any former requisitions or representations of mine, I am encouraged to hope, that the present, which is equally important with any I have ever made, will meet with a favorable reception.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your Excellency's most obedient and humble servant,

P. S. The return of troops called for by resolve of the 10th of December, is collecting, and will be forwarded very soon. The remote situation of some of the corps has made it a tedious business, but such is the nature of it, that an accurate return cannot be digested until the returns of all the legionary corps and those of artillery are obtained, that credit may be given for the men serving in them.

CIRCULAR LETTER TO STATES.[1]

HEAD QUARTERS, PHILADELPHIA,
31 January, 1782.

SIR,—

I have the honor to transmit herewith returns of the Number of men now actually in service, from your state, in order that measures may be adopted for completing the regiments to the full establishment agreeably to the resolution of Congress of the 10th of December. I cannot omit so favorable an opportunity of expressing to you my sentiments on this subject, and of entreating in the most earnest manner, that there may be a speedy, pointed, and effectual compliance with those requisitions.

It will, I flatter myself, be unnecessary to recapitulate all the arguments I made use of, in the circular letter I had the honor to address to the several states, at the close of the campaign of 1780, in which, it must be remembered, I took the liberty to urge, from the knowledge I had of our affairs, and a series of experience, the policy, the expediency, the necessity of recruiting the army as the only probable means of bringing the war to a speedy and happy conclusion ;—if these arguments had any influence at that time—if the consequent exertions were crowned with any success—if the present crisis exhibits new and more forcible inducements for still greater efforts ; let me point you and your legislature to these considerations, and especially let me recommend, in the warmest terms, that all the fruits of the successes, which have been obtained the last campaign, may not be thrown away by an inglorious winter of languor and inactivity.

However, at this advanced stage of the war, it might seem to be an insult upon the understanding to suppose a long train of reasoning necessary to prove that a respectable force in the field is essential to the establishment of our liberties and independence ; yet, as I am apprehensive, the prosperous issue of the combined operation in Virginia, may have (as is too common in such cases) the pernicious tendency of lulling the country into a lethargy of inactivity and security ; and as I feel my own reputation, as well as

[1] New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, and New Jersey.

the interest, the honor, the glory, and the happiness of my country, intimately concerned in the event, I will ask the indulgence to speak the more freely on those accounts, and to make some of those observations, which the present moment seems to suggest ;—that the broken and perplexed state of the enemy's affairs, and the successes of the last campaign, on our part, ought to be a powerful incitement to vigorous preparations for the next—that, unless we strenuously exert ourselves to profit by these successes, we shall not only lose all the solid advantages that might be derived from them, but we shall become contemptible in our own eyes, in the eyes of our enemy, in the opinion of posterity, and even in the estimation of the whole world, which will consider us as a nation unworthy of prosperity, because we know not how to make a right use of it—that, although we cannot, by the best concerted plans absolutely command success ; although the race is not always to the swift, or the battle to the strong, yet without presumptuously waiting for miracles to be wrought in our favor, it is our indispensable duty, with the deepest gratitude to Heaven for the past, and humble confidence in its smiles on our future operations, to make use of all the means in our power for our defence and security—that this period is particularly important, because no circumstances since the commencement of the war, have been so favorable to the recruiting service ; and because it is to be presumed, from the increase of population, and the brilliant prospects before us, it is actually in our power to complete the army before the opening of the campaign—that however flattering the prospects may be, much still remains to be done, which cannot probably be effected unless the army is recruited to its establishment ; and consequently the continuance or termination of the war seems principally to rest on the vigor and decision of the states in this interesting point. And finally, that it is our first object of policy, under every supposible or possible case, to have a powerful army early in the field ; for we must suppose, the enemy are either disposed "to prosecute the war," or "to enter into a negociation for peace "—there is no other alternative. On the former supposition, a respectable army becomes necessary, to counteract the enemy and to prevent the accumulating expences of a linger-

ing war ; on the latter, nothing but a decidedly superior force can enable us boldly to claim our rights, and dictate the law at the pacification.—So that whatever the disposition of the enemy may be, it is evidently our only interest and economy to act liberally and exert ourselves greatly during the present winter, to cut off at once all the expences of the war, by putting a period to it.

And soon might that day arrive, soon might we hope to enjoy all the blessings of peace, if we could see again the same animation in the cause of our country inspire every breast, the same passion for freedom and military glory impel our youths to the field, and the same disinterested patriotism pervade every rank of men, as was conspicuous at the commencement of this glorious revolution ; and I am persuaded, only some great occasion was wanting, such as the present moment exhibits, to rekindle the latent sparks of that patriotic fire into a generous flame, to rouse again the unconquerable spirit of liberty, which has sometimes seemed to slumber for a while, into the full vigor of action.

I cannot now conclude this letter, without expressing my full expectation, that the several states, animated with the noblest principles, and convinced of the policy of complying faithfully with the requisitions, will be only emulous which shall be foremost in furnishing its quota of men ; that the calculation of the numbers wanted to fill the deficiency may be so ample, as (allowing for the casualties and deductions) will be sufficient certainly to complete the battalions ; that the measures for this purpose, may be so explicit, pointed and energetic, as will inevitably furnish the recruits in season ; and that such checks may be established, to prevent imposition as to the quality of the men, that no recruits may be accepted, but those who are in fact able-bodied and effective. Should any of a different description be sent to the army, they must be rejected, the expences thrown away, and the service injured, though others are required to supply their places ; for it is only deceiving ourselves, with having a nominal instead of a real force, and consuming the public provisions and clothing to no effect, by attempting to impose decrepit and improper men or boys upon us as soldiers.

The returns before alluded to, being but this moment collected, I regret that it was not possible they should have been

forwarded sooner; to prevent a miscarriage or delay, in so important a communication, I have committed them to —— who will have the honor of delivering these despatches, and explaining my ideas very perfectly; as he is charged solely with this business he will return as soon as it is negociated, but he is instructed to wait until he can bear such official accounts from you to me, as will fully inform me, what aid may absolutely be relied upon from your state, which, in conjunction with the other reports of a similar nature, must serve as a basis, on which we may build our final plans and arrangements for the ensuing campaign.[1]

I have the honour to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

PHILADELPHIA, 6 February, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 21st of Jany., enclosing the copy of your Letter of the 22 of Octr. to Major-General Stark, which, agreeably to your desire, I return by this conveyance—the arguments and reflections respecting the dispute of the Vermontese, made use of in that Letter, appear so just as well as political, as to be particularly calculated to heal the unhappy disturbances and produce a reconciliation: This is one of the many proofs you have given of your ardent desire to put a period to internal contention, and unite all the separate and jarring interests in prosecuting the great common cause of America.

I have shewed yours of the 21st ulto. to, and conferr'd with the Minister of Foreign Affairs—My sen-

[1] This last paragraph was omitted in the letter to Massachusetts. The bearer of the letter differed for each state. Col. Dearborn took that for New Hampshire, and Lt.-Col. Olney that for Rhode Island.

timents, in general, respecting the necessity of perfect unanimity among ourselves in order to give energy & decision to our collective efforts against the Enemy, are too well known to be insisted upon; for I have had frequent occasion to repeat, that it was my most fervent wish, that all grounds of jealousy and dispute between any districts of the Inhabitants of the United States, which were at variance might be removed by an amicable adjustment of their differences, and that, in my opinion, moderate measures (so long as they can be adopted with propriety) are much more likely than violent ones to produce such a salutary effect—if therefore my public advice in my late circular Letter, or my private opinion, which has been given without reserve on every occasion can be of any avail, I am confident the consideration of all other matters would be swallowed up in or made subservient to the general good of the whole—but as it has ever been a point of delicacy with me, while acting only in a military character, not to interfere in the civil Concerns of the Continent or the Legislatures, except where they are intimately connected with Military matters, I should not think myself at liberty, without deviating from that rule, to intermeddle so far as to dictate particular modes of accommodation (however earnestly I desire it may be effected) especially on a subject which has been under the immediate consideration of Congress itself; whose directions, it is my duty as well as inclination to be guided by.—

I am informed Mr. Ira Allen and Mr. Fay have

arrived in this Town from Vermont, on some public business to Congress ; what the object of their Mission is I know not. Should any thing interesting transpire I shall communicate it to you.—

Mrs. Washington joins me in presenting her Compliments to Mrs. Schuyler and yourself. I am, &c.

TO THE COUNT DE ROCHAMBEAU.

PHILADELPHIA, 9 February, 1782.

SIR,

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of the 12th and 22d ultimo, the last, enclosing copies of General Greene's letter to you and your answer. After informing you that I concur with you in opinion, that it would not be politic at this moment to move a detachment from your main body to the southward, permit me to assure you, that I very sensibly feel your goodness in determining to advance the legion as soon as possible to the frontiers of North Carolina. I have only to request, that the commanding officer may have orders to proceed further or not as circumstances may require. The move of the legion will be perplexing to the enemy ; and, as it has been heretofore the advance corps of your Excellency's army, you may, I think, give out, (and it will carry with it strong marks of probability,) that your whole army is to follow, as soon as the weather will admit of the march. Supposing the enemy should receive the reinforcement from Ireland, I do not imagine that he will, after the many severe blows

he has felt from plunging himself into the country, march to any great distance from Charleston; especially if he consider, that, while France has a naval superiority in the West Indian or American seas, a body of troops might be easily thrown in between him and the town, whereby his ruin would be inevitable.

It would certainly be our true interest, if it could be done, to give General Greene such a force, that he should be able, under all circumstances, to keep the enemy confined to their posts upon the coasts of South Carolina and Georgia; but, should your excellent and valuable body of men be made use of for that purpose, it might possibly interfere with the plan of campaign, which we may shortly expect from your court. Those States, whose troops compose the southern army, will be pressed to send forward reinforcements to General Greene as early and as expeditiously as possible.

I am apprehensive your Excellency will think me unmindful of a most agreeable piece of duty, which I have been directed to perform by Congress. It is the presentation of two of the field-pieces taken at York, with an inscription engraved on them expressive of the occasion. I find a difficulty in getting the engraving properly executed. When it will be finished, I shall with peculiar pleasure put the cannon into your possession.

In an address, which I have lately received from the Senate of the State of Virginia, on account of the surrender of York and Gloucester, I am desired to

make their most grateful acknowledgments to your Excellency and to the officers and men under your command, for your eminent services upon that occasion, and to assure you, that they see with pleasure the harmony, which subsists between the inhabitants of the State and their generous allies. I take the first opportunity of making this agreeable communication.

In my letter of the 14th of January, I requested that Lord Rawdon might be exchanged for Brigadier-General Moultrie of South Carolina, in preference to any of the colonels mentioned by Sir Henry Clinton; it being more conformable to our practice than to make exchanges by composition. I now take the liberty of confirming that request.[1] I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA, 18 February, 1782.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to enclose copies of the reports of the commissary-general of prisoners, who has just returned from New York, with copies of the papers to which he refers. Your Excellency will perceive thereby, that the restriction upon the exchange of Lieutenant-General Earl Cornwallis operates against the liberation of Brigadier-General Scott, seven colonels and two lieutenant-colonels, who, upon the principles of the tariff established between us and the enemy, are equivalent to his Lordship in value.

[1] Lord Rawdon was later exchanged for General Scott.

I also enclose the copy of a letter from Sir Henry Clinton, by which it would appear the exchange of Mr. Laurens might be effected for Earl Cornwallis, should Congress think proper to accede to the proposal. I beg leave to remark upon that letter, that there has been some misconception either on the part of Colonel Laurens or Lord Cornwallis, as to what passed on the subject in Virginia. Colonel Laurens asked me, whether, supposing an exchange could be effected between his father and his Lordship, I should have any objection to it. I answered, none personally, and that, as Congress had made no difficulty in offering General Burgoyne for Mr. Laurens, I thought they might now probably offer Lord Cornwallis, but that the matter did not depend upon me. This I find has been construed into an absolute consent on my part.[1]

With respect to the policy of prohibiting the exchange of Lord Cornwallis, I will not pretend to determine. I cannot, however, help observing that it operates disagreeably in giving uneasiness to those officers of ours, who can only be exchanged by composition, and who are by the enemy set against him, and that it may be considered as a departure from the spirit of the terms of the capitulation of York.

Mr. Sproat's proposition of the exchange of British soldiers for American seamen, if acceded to, will

[1] When, in November, Congress was called upon to ratify the discharge of Cornwallis, Hamilton mentioned as an argument in favor of a ratification, that "some intimations had been given by Colonel Laurens, with the privity of General Washington, to Cornwallis, previous to his capitulation, that he might be exchanged for his father, then in the Tower."—*Madison Papers*, i., 206.

immediately give the enemy a very considerable reinforcement, and will be a constant draft hereafter upon the prisoners of war in our hands. It ought also to be considered, that few or none of the naval prisoners in New York and elsewhere belong to the Continental service. I however feel for the situation of these unfortunate people, and wish to see them released by any mode, which will not materially affect the public good. In some former letters upon this subject I have mentioned a plan, by which I am certain they might be liberated nearly as fast as captured. It is by obliging the captains of all armed vessels, both public and private, to throw their prisoners into common stock under the direction of the commissary-general of prisoners. By these means they would be taken care of and regularly applied to the exchange of those in the hands of the enemy. Now the greater part are dissipated, and the few that remain are applied partially. I shall be obliged to your Excellency for obtaining and transmitting me the sentiments of Congress upon these subjects as early as convenient. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN LAURENS.[2]

MY DEAR LAURENS, PHILADELPHIA, 18 February, 1782.

I have had the pleasure to receive your favor of the 10th of December, and also the report of the judicious and successful movement of General

[1] Read in Congress, February 20th. Referred to Boudinot, Cornell and Bee.

[2] Colonel Laurens joined the southern army shortly after the capitulation at Yorktown.

Greene, by which he compelled the enemy to abandon their out-posts. This brilliant manœuvre is another proof of the singular abilities which that officer possesses.

Since my last despatches from South Carolina I have been informed, via Virginia, of the intelligence General Greene had received, that a reinforcement was expected from Ireland, of the application he had made in consequence to the Count de Rochambeau, and of the resolution the Count had taken of detaching the legion of Lauzun to his aid. I hope this force, together with the corps of Armand, will give such a decided superiority of cavalry, as will prevent the enemy from reoccupying and ravaging the country again, should the whole reinforcement from Ireland arrive. And I must confess, I cannot entirely rely upon it, as I have not heard the intelligence from any other quarter, although a frigate has just arrived at New York with the King of England's speech, and despatches from administration. Nothing however has transpired except the speech, from the complexion of which no decisive opinion can be formed.

But I think a little time will disclose what the enemy's intentions are, (should they still persist in the prosecution of the war,) whether they mean to occupy the two great posts of New York and Charleston, or concentrate the whole of their force together. In the former case, reinforcements may undoubtedly be expected; and I know of nothing, which can be opposed to them with such a prospect of success, as

the corps you have proposed should be levied in Carolina. To make the campaign decisive is our great object. I wish that the States might be impressed with the necessity of taking their measures accordingly, and that the war might not be procrastinated by want of exertion on our part.[1] Believe me, my dear Laurens, I am convinced, under all circumstances, of your unbounded zeal in the service of your country. That success may ever attend you in the pursuit of personal glory and public felicity, is the earnest wish of your affectionate friend, &c.

P. S. The Gentlemen of the family request their affectionate regards may be presented to you.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

SIR, PHILADA., 20 February, 1782.

Since my letter to your Excellency of the 18th Inst, I have been honored with the public and secret Resolves of Congress of the same date; the first empowering me to appoint commissioners for the pur-

[1] *General Washington to General Greene.*—"A frigate has just arrived at New York from England. She was despatched immediately after the news of Cornwallis' surrender. I have seen the New York prints, and no mention is made of any reinforcement having sailed for America; a circumstance, which, had it happened, I think would not have been omitted at this time, when the loyalists are desponding, and looking upon themselves as lost and unsupported. The reinforcement from New York was not more than six or seven hundred men. The King's speech at the opening of the British Parliament is firm, and manifests a determination to continue the war, although there is no appearance of his having made any alliances. This I hope will prove to the States the necessity of complying with the requisitions upon them for men and supplies. Every argument that I could invent to induce them to it, has been made use of by me in two sets of circular letters. No part of the intelligence brought by

poses therein mentioned, the last prohibiting the exchange of Lieutt.-General Lord Cornwallis by composition, which is the only mode by which he ever can be exchanged, except for Civil characters, we having no military Grade answerable to his.[1]

I find myself so exceedingly embarrassed by the operation of the secret Resolve, that I hope Congress will excuse me for pointing out the difficulties in which it involves me personally, and the manner in which it affects, as I conceive, the public good. By the public resolve all former restrictions are taken off, and I am at liberty to go into a general exchange without limitation. When it therefore shall be found, that Lord Cornwallis is still detained, those officers of ours (particularly our full colonels, most of whom can only be exchanged on composition), who will be sufferers on that account, will naturally apply to me for the reasons. I must either submit to their opin-

the frigate has yet gone abroad. It is no doubt of consequence. If any alteration is to be made in the disposition of the force remaining in America, it must soon become visible. Until we hear from the court of France, we can only be making general preparations. Men are the most material of all; and I cannot say that the means of obtaining them, so far as I have yet heard, are efficacious."—February 18th.

[1] By the resolves here referred to, Congress invested General Washington with powers to negotiate an exchange of prisoners on the broadest scale, and to take measures for settling all accounts respecting prisoners; but these resolves were accompanied with a "*secret instruction*," that nothing contained therein "should be construed to authorize the exchange of Lieutenant-General Cornwallis by composition." It appears to have been the object of this reservation to secure the release of Mr. Laurens, who was yet retained a prisoner in England, and had been for more than a year shut up in the Tower of London. The southern members were particularly strenuous on this point, as well as indignant at the mode adopted by Lord Cornwallis in prosecuting the war at the south. For a remarkable expression of the feelings of the delegates from South Carolina and Georgia on this subject, see *Journals*, February 23d.

ions on a conduct so apparently strange, or, to justify myself, must be under the necessity of betraying a secret vote of Congress.

In order more clearly to point out the manner, in which the secret resolve, if adhered to, will operate against the public interest, I must beg leave to request the attention of Congress to a short recital of the reasons, which induced me, at this particular time, to propose a meeting of commissioners to the British Commander-in-chief.

On my return from Virginia, the superintendent of Finance informed me, that the subsistence of the prisoners of war had now become so serious a matter, that there was an absolute necessity of endeavoring to obtain payment of the money already due to us upon that account, and at all events to fix upon some certain and regular mode of payment for their maintenance in future. In order to effect these, he advised my making propositions to Sir Henry Clinton to appoint commissioners, not only to liquidate the accounts of prisoners, but to endeavor, by the establishment of a permanent Cartel (a matter, which we have never yet been able to obtain), to adjust a number of points relating to the exchanges and accommodation of Prisoners, and for want of which, individuals, as well subjects of the United States as those of Great Britain, are daily suffering.

Sir Henry Clinton, after several letters had passed upon the subject, acceded to the proposition in the most extensive sense. Commissioners were named, and I only waited for the authority of Congress to

enable me to invest the Commissioners on our part with proper powers. This by the public resolve of the 18th is amply granted, but by the subsequent secret resolve in a manner done away. The powers of our commissioners can only have reference to the public resolve, and whatever stipulations are entered into will be upon a confidence, that no further obstructions will be thrown in the way. The exchange of Lord Cornwallis (as heretofore) would be one of the first things demanded; and, should that be rejected, as it must be, the enemy would not only have it in their power to tax us with breach of faith, but they might recede in turn from any part of their agreements; and it is to be feared, that they would pitch upon that respecting the payment for the maintenance of their Prisoners, as it will be a weighty matter to them, and one which they can evade with less inconvenience than almost any other, as we have a very great number of theirs to support, and they few of ours.

In addition to what I have said, I have only further to remark, that the Gentlemen, who have been named by me to execute the Commission, have objections to going upon it, except they can meet those from the British on fair and open terms. This can only be done either by withdrawing the secret vote entirely, or by adhering publicly to the resolution of detaining Lord Cornwallis, and trying what can be effected under such circumstances. The last would remove my personal scruples, (if it should not be deemed a violation of the capitulation); but I fear, as I before

mentioned, that the general interest would suffer by the measure. We never can expect that such a cartel, as will be really beneficial to us, will be acceded to while an officer of Lord Cornwallis's high rank and Family influence is excepted, nor indeed while a power is reserved or implied of being able to deprive of the right of exchange any other officer, who may hereafter as a Prisoner of war become entitled to the advantages of a stipulation of such a nature as a Cartel.[1]

I ever with diffidence enter into discussions of the above kind, and I am now more than commonly apprehensive, that my conduct may appear reprehensible, as Congress have been pleased, upon several late applications, to adhere to their former opinions respecting Lord Cornwallis. Had I not foreseen new difficulties arising from restricting his exchange, I should have deemed myself as inexcusable in further controverting the will of Congress, as I should have been, had I remained silent when I thought my voice might have conduced to the general good. That that has been my only motive for taking up so much of your time I beg you will believe, as sincerely as that I am, with the utmost respect, &c.[2]

[1] On a consideration of this letter, it was resolved by Congress, "That the Commander-in-chief be authorized to agree to the exchange of Earl Cornwallis by composition; provided that the Honorable Henry Laurens be liberated and proper assurances be obtained, that all accounts for the support of the convention prisoners, and all other prisoners of war, shall be speedily settled and discharged."—*Journals*, February 23d.

[2] Read in Congress, February 21st. Referred to Boudinot, Carroll, and Bee.

"I have appointed the meeting of our respective commissioners to be at Elizabethtown on the 15th of next month. If I hear nothing further from your

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

PHILADELPHIA, 28 February, 1782.

* * * Had the valuable storeship the Marquis la Fayette arrived safe from France, we should have had it in our power to have supplied the officers with the necessary Articles of Cloathing out of the public Magazine; but she unfortunately miscarried. The Financier upon being informed of this and knowing the distress of the greater part of the officers, who had now no right to place any further dependence upon their States, they being called upon for a sum equal to the whole expences of the war, immediately set about devising a plan by which he could afford relief to their wants, without involving himself deeper in those difficulties with which he is perplexed by the scantiness of public funds.

Upon enquiry he found Gentlemen of extensive commercial Credit (Messrs. Sands & Co.) willing to supply a quantity of goods proper for the Army at their places of Cantonment upon a credit of six months and upon as low terms as they could be procured else where. He therefore fixed upon the measure which is now about to be adopted, that of giving each

cellency, I shall take it for granted, that you accede to the time and place. And I would propose, as is usual in such cases, that a cessation of hostilities should take place, during the meeting, from Amboy to Newark, both included.

"As my commissioners will go fully authorized to treat of the exchanges of Lord Cornwallis and the Honorable Mr. Laurens, I have no occasion to be particular in my answer to your Excellency's letter on that subject. I shall only observe, that I apprehend Lord Cornwallis misunderstood Colonel Laurens, in the conversation they had upon that matter in Virginia. I could never have given an assurance, that his Lordship should be exchanged for Mr. Laurens, the father of the colonel, as I had no authority to make any such stipulation." —*Washington to Sir Henry Clinton*, 26 February, 1782.

officer a note for a certain sum payable in 6 months, which the owners of the goods will receive in payment. But there is no obligation upon any officer to take these notes, or, after he has received them, to purchase Cloathing of Mr. Sands. Should he have supplied himself before hand, he may keep them untill the time of payment, which will be punctually complied with—he may discount them—or he may lay them out in any kind of Stores for the Campaign. The great object was to procure a supply of Cloathing of which the bulk of the officers were undoubtedly in want. Mr. Morris very prudently foresaw, that the end would not be answered except a person could be procured who would engage to furnish a quantity of goods and to take the promissory notes at their full value. In this I flatter myself he has succeeded, as I am informed by those Gentlemen who have taken up Goods from Mr. Sands that they have been perfectly satisfied with his prices.

It is to be hoped if the States comply in any degree with the requisitions upon them, that we shall be able to put both officers and men upon as good and regular a footing for pay as they are now—for Cloathing and provision, to which it was certainly wise first to attend—The new taxes cannot be expected to come into use for some time, and therefore the kind of anticipation which the Financier has hit upon was a matter of necessity, not of choice, and as such, I hope it will be received by the Gentlemen of the Army, who will be certainly benefitted by it.

I am, &c.

CIRCULAR TO THE EASTERN AND MIDDLE STATES.

PHILADELPHIA, 5 March, 1782.

SIR,

The operations of next Campaign being contingent—depending in a great degree upon measures which are not within my controul—and very much upon the plans of the Enemy & their efforts to carry them into execution—it is impossible for me, at this time to say whether any, or how many militia ye States in this part of the Continent may be called upon to furnish for the purposes of the Ensuing Campaign : but as I persuade myself it is the wish of every one of them to see a vigorous offensive plan prosecuted with a view of terminating the war honorably and speedily ; it becomes my duty to inform them that, the Continental force, (admitting the Battalions should be compleated) aided by any Auxiliary Troops that I have any expectations of, is totally inadequate to the first & great object which presents itself to our view and therefore it may be essential to my future plans that the Executive powers of the States should be—if they are not so already—vested with sufficient Authority to call forth, properly equipped, such a body of Militia as the exigences of Service may require—the demand will not be made but in case of necessity—and will be postponed as long as possible—the consequences therefore of a want of such powers, or of the delay, occasioned by calling an Assembly, on such an emergency, might prove fatal to our operations—and injurious to our cause.

I need not add how much it is my wish and desire, and how much the public interest will be promoted by it, that the Continental Regiments should be compleated—every man, of which these are deficient, will add to the draught of Militia; and doubly to the public expences while the Troops will not be so competent to the purposes for which they are wanted, to say nothing of the disadvantages which Agriculture and Manufactures will sustain, by having the laborers and artisans called off from their work.—I would beg leave to suggest that the longer term militia can be drawn out for, the more beneficial and less expensive will their Services be, and that, in case of a siege, they ought to be engaged during the continuance of it, or until relieved by an equal number so that the operating strength may not be diminished at a critical moment when it may be most wanted.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM IRVINE.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

You will proceed with all convenient despatch to Fort Pitt, the object of your command, and you will take such measures for the security of that post and for the defence of the western frontier, as your Continental force combined with the militia of the neighboring country will admit of. Under present appearances and circumstances, I can promise no further addition to your regular force, than a proportion of recruits for the Virginia and Pennsylvania regiments, which are already upon the western station; consequently offensive operations, except upon a small scale, cannot just now be brought into contemplation. You may, however, still continue to keep yourself informed of the situation of Detroit, and the strength of the enemy at that place.

With respect to the subject of the letters, which you have lately received from Colonel Gibson, I can only repeat what I have said to you personally. You must endeavor to convince both officers and men, that measures are actually taking to put them upon such a footing with regard to their provisions, clothing, and pay, that it is to be hoped they will ere long have no reason to complain. They will have already found the difference between their past and present mode of obtaining provisions and clothes; and they cannot therefore doubt, that the only remaining difficulty, (which is on account of pay,) will be removed as soon as the financier can reap the advantages of the taxes for the current year, which are but just laid, and cannot therefore come yet into use. The officers and men must, upon a moment's reflection, be convinced of the wisdom of applying the public money in hand to procuring victuals and clothes. They cannot be dispensed with even for a day; and when both are assured that certificates of pay, due to the 1st of the present year, will be given with interest, and that pay thenceforward will be more regular and as frequent as the public treasury will admit, they ought to be satisfied.

Should the troops composing the western garrisons, be discontented with their situation, and think that they are partially dealt by, you may make them an offer of being relieved and of taking

their chance of the emoluments, which they may suppose accrue to those serving with either the northern or southern armies. There may be policy in this offer, because, if I am not mistaken, most of the men, who have connexions in the upper country, would rather remain there at some disadvantage than be brought away from their families. * * * 8 March, 1782.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL KNOX AND GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

INSTRUCTIONS.

GENTLEMEN,

The powers of equal date herewith authorize you to proceed to Elizabethtown, in the State of New Jersey, in order to meet commissioners on the part of the enemy, on Friday, the 15th[1] instant, for the purposes in the powers fully recited.

You will consider the settlement of accounts for the subsistence of prisoners of all descriptions from the commencement of the war to ; obtaining payment, or security for the payment, of the large balance, which it is presumed was due to the United States at that period, and establishing some certain arrangements for the regular payment of the subsistance of prisoners from that time forward as the principal objects of your commission.

From the want of an appointment of a commissary of prisoners until some time after the commencement of the war, from the variety of hands to which the charge of prisoners was committed, and from the little attention, which was for a long time paid to the sums expended for their support, I fear it will be difficult for you to collect the materials necessary to form an account sufficiently accurate to satisfy yourselves, or to gain credit with the commissioners on the part of the enemy. And it is also probable, that the accounts, which will be produced by them, will be alike subject to many objections for want of proper vouchers and other causes.

[1] The commissioners did not meet and exchange powers till the 31st of March, the time having been deferred at the request of Sir Henry Clinton.

You are therefore at liberty, if you find no probability of being able to make a regular settlement, to compound the matter, by fixing upon such a sum as shall appear to you reasonable, which sum shall, upon payment, be looked upon as a full and final discharge of all demands on the part of the United States from the commencement of the war to the time which you shall specify. You are, then, in order to prevent all future disputes, to determine, to what a ration for the support of a prisoner of war shall mutually consist; the value of that ration, not only in whole, but in its component parts; what vouchers shall be esteemed mutually valid; and obtain and give proper assurances for the regular monthly, quarterly, &c., payments of the balances, as they may respectively become due.

Before you proceed to the negotiation of exchanges, you will pay due regard to the resolve of Congress of the 23d of February last, (with copy of which you are furnished,)which authorizes the exchange of Lieutenant-General Earl Cornwallis only upon certain conditions therein specified. By the word *liberated*, in the resolve referred to, it is not to be understood, that Mr. Laurens is to be given up without any equivalent. At what the enemy will rate him is uncertain. Congress once offered a lieutenant-general for him; and, if the same should be demanded now, and insisted upon, you are at liberty to comply. If circumstances should render the exchange of Lord Cornwallis impracticable, the respective commissaries of prisoners may proceed to the exchange of other officers; and, if the enemy should persist in their resolution of detaining a certain number of our officers of rank, as a counter security to our detention of Lord Cornwallis, it may be submitted to, upon the following principle, that it will be be better for four or five gentlemen (the number who will be involved) to remain in captivity, than the whole, amounting to considerably above one hundred.[1]

[1] "I have received, since my arrival at these Quarters, your favor of the 12th of Feby., respecting the exchange of your Honble. father for Lord Cornwallis. I am sorry to inform you, that, upon my arrival at Philadelphia, and for a long time after I had been there, I experienced the greatest disinclination in Congress to the exchange of Lord Cornwallis upon any terms; and that it was not till after I had combated their objections in different ways, and at several

In compliance with a resolve of Congress of the 20th of December last, (copy of which and some papers relating to it you have herewith,) you will enter into a discussion with the British commissioners upon the powers and conduct of the Board of Directors to the Associated Loyalists in New York, and you will endeavor to devise some means for the prevention of that kind of depredation, which is complained of. On this subject you will do nothing conclusive, but report to me the substance of the measures, which may have seemed to the British commissioners and yourselves most likely to answer the end.

I recommend to your particular attention the case of one Summers, a native of Pennsylvania, taken in 1778, and yet detained upon Long Island, notwithstanding every reasonable offer has been made to procure his exchange. The commissary of prisoners can inform you fully of his situation and circumstances.

Should you enter into either a general or special cartel, you will endeavor to stipulate, that, in future, citizens not in arms shall not be considered as subjects of capture, but in particular cases, such as for instance for guides, for intelligence, and such like purposes; and that they shall be well treated, and discharged after the ends for which they were captured are answered.

Should the admiral accede to my proposition of sending commissioners to meet you, on the subject of the treatment and exchange of marine prisoners, you will endeavor in the first place to obtain a change in the mode of keeping our seamen confined. The daily complaint of the miseries incident to confinement on board prison-ships will authorize you to remonstrate warmly on that head, and to insist upon an alteration of conduct. In respect to the support and mode of payment for the subsistence of seamen, you will be guided by the instruction relating to the rations of soldiers.

meetings of their committees, that I got the matter placed upon such a footing, as to leave me at liberty to negotiate the exchange of that officer at any rate. The principal difficulties are now so far removed, as to admit commissioners on each side to meet, (and they are now sitting at Elizabeth Town) for the purpose of exchanges, in which Mr. Laurens's is particularly given in charge, for settling of accounts, &c; and I hope, unless some untoward impediment shd. intervene in the prosecution of this business, that you will soon meet the accomplishment of your wishes."— *Washington to Col. Laurens*, 22 April, 1782.

You are acquainted with the difficulties under which we labor, as to the means of procuring the exchange of the American seamen, who fall into the hands of the enemy. It but rarely happens, that those captured by private vessels of war are given up to the Continental commissaries. Some are taken into our service, many escape through negligence, and therefore it is that the balance of marine prisoners has been generally greatly against us. The mode proposed by Admiral Digby of giving up land prisoners for seamen is altogether inadmissible. It would prove a constant source of reinforcement to the enemy. Under present circumstances I do not see, that you can come to any final determination upon the mode of exchanging or liberating seamen. Should commissaries meet you on that subject, you will in conjunction with them form a plan, which may be deemed mutually equitable and convenient, and report upon it.

You have herewith the copies of the letters, which have passed between the British general and admiral and myself upon the subject of your commission. The superintendent of finance will furnish you with materials for stating our claims for subsistence of prisoners, so far as he has been able to obtain them; and the commissary of prisoners will furnish you with any official papers, which may be in his possession, and which may be found necessary to the accomplishment of a general or special cartel. Given under my hand and seal, at Philadelphia, the 11th day of March, 1782.

P. S. Since the above, I have been furnished by Congress with a number of representations respecting the treatment of our marine prisoners. I have thought it proper to put them into your hands, that you may make the necessary use of them.

TO JAMES McHENRY.

MY DEAR SIR, PHILADELPHIA, 12 March, 1782.

The fair hand, to whom your letter of the 20th of January was committed, presented it safe, and, as you very truly observed, the value of it was enhanced by

it. Good laws, ample means, and sufficient powers, may render the birth of your intendant[1] a public benefit; and, from the spirit of your people, I hope these are provided. Without them, the appointment must be nugatory. Never, since the commencement of the present revolution, has there been in my judgment a period, when vigorous measures were more consonant to sound policy than the present. The speech of the British King, and the addresses of the Lords and Commons, are proofs as clear as Holy Writ to me of two things;—their wishes to prosecute the American war, and their fears of the consequences. My opinion, therefore, of the matter is, that the minister will obtain supplies for the current year, prepare vigorously for another campaign, and then prosecute the war, or treat of peace, as circumstances and fortuitous events may justify; and that nothing will contribute more to the first, than a relaxation or apparent suppineness on the part of these States. The debates upon the addresses evidently prove, what I have here advanced, to be true; for according to the explanation of them, [they] are meant to answer any purpose the ministers may have in view. What madness then can be greater, or policy and economy worse, than to let the enemy again rise upon our folly and want of exertion? Shall we not be justly chargeable for all the blood and treasure, which shall be wasted in a lingering war, procrastinated by false ex-

[1] An officer recently appointed by the legislature of Maryland, and "vested with powers to destroy that disorder in the affairs of the State, which had arisen chiefly from bad money and want of money."

pectations of peace, or timid measures for prosecuting the war? Surely we shall; and much is it to be lamented, that our endeavors do not at all times accord with our wishes. Each State is anxious to see the end of our warfare, but shrinks when it is called upon for the means to accomplish it; and either withholds altogether, or grants them in such a manner as to defeat the end. Such, it is to be feared, will be the case in many instances respecting the requisitions of men and money.

I have the pleasure, however, to inform you, that the Assembly of this State,[1] now sitting, have passed their supply-bill without a dissenting voice, and that a laudable spirit seems to pervade all the members of that body; but I fear, notwithstanding, they will be deficient of their quota of men. It is idle at this late period of the war, when enthusiasm is cooled, if not done away, when the minds of that class of men, who are fit subjects for soldiers, are poisoned by the high bounties which have been given, and the knowledge of the distresses under which the army has groaned is so generally diffused through every State, to suppose that our battalions can be completed by voluntary enlistment. The attempt is vain, and we are only deceiving ourselves and injuring the cause by making the experiment. There is no other effectual method to get men suddenly, but that of classing the people, and compelling each class to furnish a recruit. Here every man is interested; every man becomes a recruiting officer. If our necessity

[1] Pennsylvania.

for men did not press, I should prefer the mode of voluntary enlistment to all others; but as it does, I am sure it will not answer, and that the season for enterprise will be upon us long ere we are prepared for the field.

The anxious state of suspense, in which we have been for some time, and still remain, respecting the naval engagement in the West Indies and the attempt upon Brimstone Hill in the Island of St. Kitt's, is disagreeable beyond description. The issue of these events must be very interesting, and may give a very unfavorable turn to affairs in that quarter, and on this continent in consequence of it.

Mrs. Washington joins me in comp'ts to the good ladies of your acquaintance and to yourself. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

MY DEAR SIR, PHILADELPHIA, 18 March, 1782.

* * * * * *

It gives me the more pain to hear of your distresses for want of clothing and other necessaries, as you are at so great a distance, that you cannot be suddenly relieved, even if we had the means. I am not, however, without hopes, that, should the war be continued to the southward (of which I have my doubts, for reasons which I shall presently give), matters will be put into a much better train than they have hitherto been. The arrangements made already, by the superintendent of finance, have been attended with infinite public advantages, and he is

extending those arrangements as fast as circumstances will possibly admit. I am sorry to see a jealousy, arising from a supposition there has been a partiality of conduct. I am certain that there has been no such intention, and that, instead of a charge of having done too little, it will soon be a matter of wonder how Mr. Morris has done so much with so small means. As I know he corresponds with you on the affairs of his department, I shall content myself with saying, that, before Colonel Carrington leaves town, measures will be taken to enable him to make provision in future for the ready transportation of stores, and for the accommodation of troops moving to the southward. It is agreed that the elaboratory shall be removed from Richmond to New London.

In my former letters upon this subject, I acquainted you with the reasons, which operated against Count de Rochambeau's detaching more than the legion of Lauzun towards South Carolina, upon your requisition for a reinforcement.[1] Although my instructions to you did not mention a power to call upon the Count for assistance, yet I look upon it as implied in my desire to you to correspond with him. The circumstances of the moment must determine whether any or what can be spared by him.

By late advices from Europe, and from the declarations of the British ministers themselves, it appears,

[1] A detachment from the French army, under the command of Choisy, and including the legion of Lauzun, had been ordered to join Greene; but believing that the English were about to evacuate the Carolinas, Choisy was directed to stop at Charlotte Court-House, Virginia.

that they have done with all thoughts of an excursive war, and that they mean to send small, if any further reinforcements to America. It may be also tolerably plainly seen, that they do not mean to hold all their present posts, and that New York will be occupied in preference to any other. Hence, and from other indications, I am induced to believe that an evacuation of the southern States will take place. Should this happen, we must concentre our force as the enemy do theirs. You will, therefore, upon the appearance of such an event, immediately make preparations for the march of the army under your command to the northward. What troops shall, in that case, be left in the southern States, will be a matter of future discussion.[1]

No other reinforcement went from New York to South Carolina, than that of the four hundred who had arrived. Letters, which you had not received when you last wrote, will have informed you, that our first intelligence respecting the number of men embarked were false. With the highest sentiments of esteem, I am, my dear Sir, &c.

[1] "It has been my uniform opinion since the capitulation of York Town, that, unless the enemy can send such reinforcements to this continent, as will in their judgment place their two principal Posts of New York and Charles Town in a state of perfect security, or they are sure of having a naval superiority on this Coast during the operations of the Campaign, they will concentre their force at one of those points; and further it has as invariably been my opinion, that New York will be the last hold they will quit in the United States. If I am mistaken in the first, I shall believe, that a negotiation of Peace or a Truce is near at hand, and, that they hazard much for the *uti possidetis*, which, from present appearances, and my conception of the views of the British Government, I have not the smallest idea of; I mean peace this year." —*Washington to Col. Laurens*, 22 April, 1782.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL KNOX AND GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, AT ELIZABETHTOWN.

GENTLEMEN, MORRISTOWN, 28 March, 1782.

I have had intimations, that, under the idea of the cessation of hostilities within certain limits, a number of people intend to come over from New York to our lines. To prevent all intercourse of this kind is the principal design of this letter. Sir William Howe, on a former occasion, proposed that a neutrality should take place to a certain distance from the spot where our commissioners were to assemble, in order that they might not meet with any interruption in the transaction of their business, from the hostilities and alarms, which might otherwise have happened in the neighbourhood of them. It was upon this principle, and for this reason, that the present proposal was made on my part; nor was it indeed, or could be construed, to extend any farther.

It is therefore my particular desire, that no persons coming from the enemy may be permitted to land, except the commissioners and those immediately connected with them. And, as I think it expedient, not only to prevent new channels of communication with the enemy from being opened, but as far as practicable to shut the former, I could wish you would take the trouble to inform yourselves of the practice of sending and receiving flags on the lines, and point out such alterations and regulations as you shall deem proper to prevent the evils, which have been complained of, as resulting from too frequent an intercourse with the enemy.

I have been informed by the commissary of prisoners, that the enemy are preparing to send out a considerable quantity of goods, under the sanction of passports granted by me for bringing out clothing, necessaries &c for the use of their prisoners. This is so contrary to my intention, and may be productive of such ill consequence, that I have sent Colonel Smith to explain the matter to you, and to request you will examine the list, and signify what articles should be considered as necessaries, and what quantity ought to be permitted to be sent out. Mr. Skinner is directed to give you the necessary information. He will also explain to you the mode, which has prevailed, of making partial exchanges. This subject I need not recommend particularly, as it is comprehended within the limits of your commission. I have the honor to be, &c.[1]

TO COLONEL MATTHIAS OGDEN.

INSTRUCTIONS.

SIR,

The spirit of enterprise, so conspicuous in your plan for surprising in their quarters and bringing off the Prince William Henry and Admiral Digby, merits applause; and you have my authority to make the attempt, in any manner, and at such a time, as your own judgment shall direct. I am fully persuaded, that it is unnecessary to caution you against offering insult or indignity to the persons of the Prince and Admiral, should you be so fortunate as to capture them; but it may not be amiss to press

[1] General Washington left Philadelphia on the 23d of March, having been there four months; and after stopping a day or two at Morristown, he proceeded to Newburg, where he arrived on the 1st of April, and established his head-quarters at that place.

the propriety of a proper line of conduct upon the party you command.

In case of success, you will, as soon as you get them to a place of safety, treat them with all possible respect; but you are to delay no time in conveying them to Congress, and reporting your proceedings with a copy of these orders. Take care not to touch upon the ground, which is agreed to be neutral, namely, from Newark to Rahway and four miles back. Given at Head-Quarters [Morristown] this 28th day of March, 1782.[1]

TO THE GENERAL OFFICERS.

NEWBURGH, 15 April, 1782.

The Commander-in-Chief states to the General Officers,

That, from the best information he has been able to obtain, the *regular* force of the enemy in New York, *at this time*, including their established Provincial Corps, amounts at least, to nine thousand men.

That the City Militia, Volunteer Companies, Rangers, and some other small Corps in the Town, amounted by a report made to the Secretary of State in the Winter of 1780 (when the enemy apprehended an attack on N. York & were preparing for defence) to 3390 Men, exclusive of Sailors & Marines—and that this is the best criterion by which he can form judgment of their present strength.

That the enemy's force in Charles Town by the last information & estimation of it consisted of 3300 Men.

That the Garrison of Savanna, in Georgia, he conceives, can not be less than 700 Men.

That even among men of political knowledge & judgment a diversity of sentiment prevails respecting the evacuation of the

[1] Washington wrote on April 28th that he had intelligence that the "centries at the doors of Sir Henry Clinton's quarters were doubled at eight o'clock every night, from the apprehension of an attempt to surprise him in them. If this be true, it is more than probable the same precaution extends to *other* personages in the city of New York—a circumstance I thought it proper for you to be advertized of."

Southern States.—That if this event should take place & the whole force of the enemy shd. be concentrated at New York it will stand thus :

Regr. Troops now at N. Yk. . .		9,000
From Charles Town		3,300
Savanna		700
	Regrs.	13,000
Militia &c. at N. York . . .		3,300
	Total	16,300

Under this state of the Enemy's force the Commander-in-Chief requests the opinion of the Genl. Officers seperately & in writing upon the following hypothetical questions.

First.—Supposing the Enemy's force at New York to be as above — That they retain possession of the Harbor of New York—and that, they have a naval superiority upon this Coast.

Secondly.—Supposing the same force—that they keep possession of the harbor—but loose their superiority at sea.

Thirdly.—That they shall have the same force in the City—but shall loose the command of the Water both in the harbor & at Sea.

Is there, it is asked, a probability in all or either of these cases that we shall be able to obtain Men, & means sufficient to undertake the seige of New York ?

——What efficient force will be necessary for the enterprise in the cases wch. may be deemed practicable ? And what number of Militia ought to be demanded to secure this force ?

If the enemy should not reinforce New York with their Southern Troops—and none should arrive from Europe, their force at that place will then be

Regulars		9,000
Militia &c.		3,390
	Total	12,390

The Commander-in-Chief propounds the same questions—identically—on this number as he did on the larger one (of

16,390) & requests that they may be answered accordingly—numbers only making the difference of the cases.

That every information may be received which is in the power of the General to give to form a judgmt. on these questions—heard——

That the Northern Army will (at present) be composed of the Regiments from New Hampshire to New Jersey inclusive—also of Hazen's; Lamb's & Crane's Regiments of Artillery and Sheldons Legionary Corps——

That the total number of the R. & File in the above Regiments of Infantry, by the last Genl. return in his possession amounts to 8,005—but from this the deductions incident to all services & peculiar to ours, are to be made, to come at the efficient strength.

That it is not in his power to inform what strength these Regiments will be brought to in season for an operation against New York.—he can only say that every argument he was master of has been urged to the respective States to have them compleated to their full establishment.——

That in case the enemy shd. evacuate the Southern States, the Continental Troops in that Qr. as far at least as North Carolina, will be ordered to rejoin the Main Army; but their numbers being small, and the March great, the support from them cannot be much—2500 Men is the most that can be expected.

That in the month of March last, he apprised the States from Delaware Eastward, that the Plans, & operations of the Campaign might require a considerable aid of Militia; & entreated that the Executive of each might, to avoid delay, be vested with sufficient powers to order them out for three months Service, to commence on their joining the Army—and

That the French force on the Continent at this time, does not, he believes, exceed 4000 effective Men—whether any or what further succors are to be expected from our allies is, as yet, unknown to him.

The Commander-in-Chief concludes the above state of matters with the following observations, that offensive operations of whatever kind they may be (being generally the result of choice) ought to be undertaken with due consideration of all circum-

stances & a moral certainty of succeeding; for besides involving the Public in a heavy expence, wch. the situation of our affairs can illy afford, disgrace & censure scarce ever fail to attend unsuccessfull Plans—while the enemy acquire spirits by and triumph at our misfortunes.

TO JOHN LEWIS (FREDERICKSBURG).

NEWBURGH, 17 April, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have heard, and sincerely lament, the death of your Father; and my concern is increased by the information in your letter of the 24th ulto., of his dying much indebted.

So far as I am interested in the Lands which he has directed, by his will, to be sold, I consent to the disposal of them on twelve months credit. The necessity however of selling them, at this time, is to be regretted; as Lands, except such as happen to be under peculiar circumstances must sell to a disadvantage when they are not in general demand, and when there is a dearth of money,—especially those which have been, and may again be exposed to the invasions of the enemy, as is the case of the lands purchased by Doctrs. Wright and Jones. I mean this as a general observation, not to oppose it to the sales you have in contemplat'n. For I am convinced from experience, that Lands far removed from the Proprietors of them—however valuable in themselves—are very unprofitable,—and because I as well as your Father's estate, stand in need of the money which my part of them will fetch. When I say this,

I take it for granted, that you do not mean to sell these Lands unless you can get the value of them, or near it; because this would not only defeat the end *you* have in view, but do injustice to Doct'r Walker and myself.

I have not a sufficient recollection of them (especially the Tracts in which Doctr. Walker holds a share) to describe any of them accurately. With respect to Norfleet's,[1] it is in No. Carolina near the line, and upon the great road leading from Suffolk to Edenton—ab't 16 miles from the former; which is, or was, a place of very extensive trade—there ought to be (if my memory serves me) upwards of a thousand acres in the tract, for which, I think, we gave £1200, and sunk a great deal more by keeping it two or three years in our own hands. The Land is level, and I believe well timbered—capable of great improvement, there being upw'ds of 400 acres of exceeding rich and open meadow ground belonging to the Tract—a great part of which is, or was ditched, and in grass, and other kinds of cultivation. The Lands purchased of Jones & Doct'r Wright lye between Norfolk & Suffolk, 6 or 8 m. from the latter, & on or near Nansemond River. They are, if I recollect right, well timbered and of good quality—level (as all the Land thereabouts is) and capable of being rendered exceedingly valuable. I do not remember what kind of buildings are on the last mentioned Tracts—the other (Norfleet's) had a good dwelling House & Kitchen with Brick Chim-

[1] See Vol. II., p. 195.

nies, & a Barn; but as it is at least ten or twelve years since I have been in that part of the Country, great changes may have taken place since. A large slipe of the Meadow land has, I am told, been taken from us; whether by legal process, or not, I am unable to say. * * *

TO THE GENERAL AND FIELD OFFICERS OF THE ARMY.

HEAD QUARTERS, April 19, 1782.

The Commander-in-chief submits the papers accompanying this, containing the case of Captain Joshua Huddy, lately hanged within the county of Monmouth in New Jersey State by a party of the enemy, to the consideration of the general officers and command'g officers of brigades and regiments, and thereupon requests from them, separately and in writing, a direct and laconic reply to the following queries, viz.:

1. Upon the state of facts in the above case, is retaliation justifiable and expedient?

2. If justifiable, ought it to take place immediately, or should a previous representation be made to Sir Henry Clinton, and satisfaction be demanded from him?

3. In case of representation and demand, who should be the person or persons to be required?

4. In case of refusal, and retaliation becoming necessary, of what description shall the officer be, on whom it is to take place; and how shall he be designated for the purpose?[1]

[1] While commanding a small body of troops at a post on Tom's River in Monmouth County, New Jersey, Captain Huddy had been attacked by a party of refugees from New York, and taken prisoner after a gallant defence. He was conveyed to New York and put in close confinement. On the 12th of April he was sent out of the city, in the charge of a number of refugees, commanded by Captain Lippincott, and hanged on the heights near Middletown. The people in the neighborhood were extremely exasperated at this act of wanton barbarity; and, at their solicitation, General Forman, who resided at

TO BARTHOLOMEW DANDRIDGE.

DEAR SIR, NEWBURGH, 20 April, 1782.

Since my last to you from Philadelphia I have been favoured with your Letter of the 20th ulto. from New Kent.

How far it is proper or improper to delay the appointment of a Guardian or Guardians to Mr. Custis's children I shall not take upon me to decide, but this I am clear in, and beg leave again to urge it, that whenever the necessity for it arrives you shou'd take upon yourself the trust. I confess to you candidly, that I see very little prospect of the War's ending with this Campaign, or if it does that I shall have leizure to engage in New Matters. My own affairs will, I am convinced, be found in a very perplexed

Monmouth, obtained affidavits and a proper statement of facts, with which he first went to Elizabethtown, where the American commissioners, General Knox and Gouverneur Morris, were then attempting to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, and laid the matter before them. By their advice he proceeded to General Washington's head-quarters, and his statement and the papers of which he was the bearer were submitted to the consideration of the general and field officers.

Twenty-five officers sent answers to the above queries in writing. They were unanimous in the opinion, that retaliation was justifiable and expedient; that the leader of the party, who murdered Captain Huddy, was the person who ought to suffer; and that, in case he could not be obtained, an officer equal in rank to Captain Huddy should be selected by lot from the British prisoners. Twenty-two of the American officers agreed in the decision, that a representation should first be made to Sir Henry Clinton and satisfaction demanded; the other three thought that the laws of war and the enormity of the offence justified an immediate execution, without previous notice to the British commander.

The officers assembled at the quarters of General Heath, who stated to them the questions. He says they were ordered not to converse together on the subject, till each one had written his opinion, sealed it up, and sent it to the Commander-in-chief.—HEATH'S *Memoirs*, p. 335. If this order was literally obeyed, the unanimity not only in their sentiments, but in the manner of expressing them, was remarkable.—*Sparks*.

condition. All my Book Acc'ts, Bonds, &c., stand as I left them (except those which have been discharged with depreciated notes)—But this is not all—matters which relate immediately to myself is the least of my concern. Unfortunately for me, I became, much against my inclination, but at the earnest request of Colo. Thos. Colvill, one of his Executors to an Estate which was left under the most peculiar circumstances imaginable, as it was intricately involved with an Estate of his Brother's (who had died before him) —and in Legacies to people in England—not by name, but by description and descent almost from Adam; who had given infinite trouble before I left Virginia by their claims, unsatisfactory proofs of their descent, discontents, &c. The other Executor—a Mr. West—whom it was intended by the Testator should, and who ought to have had all the trouble, died three or four years ago; and from an indolence of disposition, inattention to business, and bad acc'ts, has, I fear, made *that* which at *best* would have been exceedingly troublesome in a great degree perplexing and difficult, so that I have not only all these difficulties to encounter, but shall think myself very fortunate if I escape without loss. Besides this business I stand alone in another which is also under very peculiar circumstances—I mean my transactions under a power of attorney from Colo. Geo. Mercer, and his mortgages to Colo. Tayloe and myself; in which I disposed of his Estate to the Am't. of £14,000, payable the Nov'r. succeeding my leaving home, and left the business with Colo. Tayloe to finish; but this Gent'n never

took one single direct or proper step in it while he was in a condition so to do, and died insane; so that, that matter stands on a most wretched and ruinous footing. Add to this, that yielding to the pressing solicitation of my neighbor Colo. Fairfax, when he was about to leave the Country, I accepted of a power of attorney authorising me to direct his business, which when I left Virginia, was (after selling good part of his personal Estate) left at sixes and sevens.

In a word, I see so many perplexing and intricate matters before me, which must be the work of time to arrange and bring to a conclusion, that it would be injurious to the children, and madness in me, to undertake, *as a principle*, a trust which I could not discharge. Such aid however, as it ever may be with me to give to the children, especially the boy, I will afford with all my heart, with all my soul, and on the assurance of it you may rely.

Inclosed you have a copy of my Acct. with Mr. Custis, settled by Colo. Mason as the mutual friend to us both. I have no doubt but that every Article of Debit and Credit contained in it, is right; but that there is a dificiency in the acct. is obvious from the face of it, when compared with known facts. This acc't. carries with it, the *appearance* of a final settlement—comprehending all our dealings up to the date —to wit, the 28th of June, 1778. Whereas the fact is, that all articles of charge, or credit between that period and the settlem't, with the Gen'l Court on the 4th Nov., 1773, are omitted; many of which *may be* important, one I know to be so, and that is the rent

of the dower Estate near Wmsburg. during that Interval. This imperfection in the settle't I can only acct. for by their having (as I directed for Colo. Mason's satisfaction) recourse to certified copies of the last settled acc'ts as Vouchers with the Gen'l Court, and their not attending, or perhaps knowing of the open one on my Books, by which means the whole of it is excluded. I shall write to Mr. Lund Washington (by this conveyance) for a copy of the open acc't subsequent to the date of that settled with the Court, and previous to my leaving Virginia in May, 1775, as also for any acc'ts which he on my behalf may have raised since, and will send them both to you.

You also have inclosed, a Copy of Mr. Custis's Bond to and Agreement with me, at the time I relinquished all my right to and property in the Dower Estate except the Negros under that description which I had on my Estate of Mount Vernon. At the time of Bargaining, I gave him all the Horses and implements of Husbandry at the Plantation; but he was to pay for the stock of every kind which should be found thereon, at such rates as Colo. Bassett might affix to them; 47 of the cattle, however, he removed to his seat in Fairfax before any valuation was made; the remainder was appraised by Colo. Bassett on the 21st of December in that year (1778), in the manner, and to the amount of the inclosed list—the 47 head also included in this list was valued the September following at the rate of £40 pr. head by Colo. Bassett—in consequence I suppose,

of the depreciation; but to this Mr. Custis objected on account, he alledged, of the extravagant price which by the by appeared only so in sound. However, as I wanted nothing more than the real value, and was persuaded he meant to do me justice, I wrote him that the matter might be settled in any manner consistently with these views—so the matter (I believe) has rested ever since.

Thus, my dear Sir, have I given you every information in my power respecting the State of my Acc'ts with Mr. Custis. When I get, and can send you the Acc'ts which I am now writing to Mr. Lund Washington for, you will have the whole Matter as fully before you as it is in my power to place it.

If the Legislature of Virga. will not put it in the power of Individuals to recover Debts, it would be extremely hard upon Mr. Custis's Heirs to have their property sold to discharge his; when there are such ample means to do it without; if they could be got at, and when, if property was to be sold on credit, there might be the same difficulty to obtain the money arising from the Sales as there is to come at *that* which is already due. As the Assembly has called in all the Paper Money, it can no longer I presume be a tender, but if the case had been otherwise the mere attempt to do it is so incompatible with my ideas of common honesty, and is of so fraudulent a nature that I should have advised the refusal of it in every instance. The Articles which you propose to sell, to wit—Horses and Mares, can well be spared; for I think they contribute more to the amusement

than profit of the raiser at any time, and without the latter, there can be no plea for the former in the Instance before us. Without the Household furniture Mrs. Custis cannot do; this therefore ought not to be sold.

I had no particular reason for keeping and handing down to his son the Books of the late Colo. Custis, saving that I thought it would be taking the advantage of a low appraisement to make them my own property at it; and that to sell them was not an object, as they might be useful to him. How far these considerations should weigh at a time when Money is wanting, you are the best judge of. I am exceedingly glad to hear that you found your family well on your return from Fairfax, and that yr. own health was improved by the Trip. Your Sister joins me in the most Affecte. Manner to all Friends, & I am, &c.

TO SIR HENRY CLINTON.

HEAD-QUARTERS, 21 April, 1782.

SIR,

The enclosed representation from the inhabitants of the county of Monmouth, with testimonials to the facts which can be corroborated by other unquestionable evidence, will bring before your Excellency the most wanton, unprecedented, and inhuman murder, that ever disgraced the arms of a civilized people.

I shall not, because I believe it to be altogether unnecessary, trouble your Excellency with any animadversions upon this transaction. Candor obliges me

to be explicit. To save the innocent, I demand the guilty. Captain Lippincot, therefore, or the officer who commanded at the execution of Captain Huddy, must be given up; or, if that officer was of inferior rank to him, so many of the perpetrators as will, according to the tariff of exchange, be an equivalent. To do this, will mark the justice of your Excellency's character. In failure of it, I shall hold myself justifiable, in the eyes of God and man, for the measure to which I shall resort.

I beg your Excellency to be persuaded, that it cannot be more disagreeable to you to be addressed in this language, than it is to me to offer it; but the subject requires frankness and decision. I have to request your speedy determination, as my resolution is suspended but for your answer. I am, Sir, &c.[1]

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
23 April, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 8th of Feby. was acknowledged in mine of the 18th of March.

I have now received yours of the 9th ultimo from Pompton, covering the correspondence you have had with the Count de Rochambeau, and a general return of your Army.

[1] Sir Henry Clinton's answer to this letter, and some other parts of the correspondence between General Washington and the British commanders, respecting the case of Captain Huddy and Captain Asgill, were published, and are contained in the *Remembrancer*, vol. xiv., pp. 144, 155; vol. xv., pp. 127, 191.

Your apprehensions, in consequence of the movement of the legion of Lauzun, need not be much alarmed ; *the present situation of the enemy in New York, I am persuaded, will not afford any reinforcements to your quarter.*

The recruits raising in the States, from whence your army is composed, are completing as far as circumstances will admit, and, if needed, will be ready to go to you as early *as the operations of the campaign are decided ;* which, at present, from a variety of circumstances, (*among which a want of intelligence from Europe is not the least,*) *are held in a state of uncertainty.* The State of Maryland had some time ago *about three hundred men enlisted, and waiting only for their clothes,* which have been sent on from Philadelphia. A number also is collected in Pennsylvania. But, until our information respecting the enemy's intentions, and their future mode of war, is more clearly ascertained, as well as our knowledge of the support and assistance, which we expect from our ally, *it may not be well to hasten on the recruits to your army. You are not insensible of the disadvantages we have ever experienced in attempts to reinforce at your distance by land ; it having hitherto proved a weakening of the main army, without any essential augmentation to yours.*

In present circumstances, without the aid of naval forces and water conveyance, your own experience and the general knowledge you have of the country will readily decide upon the impracticability of transporting by land such heavy stores and artillery, as would be

necessary for great operations. So that you have only to content yourself with such a force as will be competent to the purpose of confining the enemy to their lines, and preventing them from carrying their ravages into the country. I wait with impatience for intelligence, *which will decide the intentions of the enemy, and fix the operations of the campaign on our part.* This, I hope, is not far distant. I am, &c.[1]

TO THE SECRETARY AT WAR.

HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,
27 April, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Finding the commissioners appointed to liquidate the accounts of moneys due for the maintenance of prisoners, and make permanent provision for their future support, have separated without accomplishing any thing, I think it highly expedient, that measures should be adopted, at this moment, for taking the German prisoners of war into our service. As this measure has been considerably agitated, I shall not amplify upon the justice and propriety of it, which to me seem very obvious. I am equally well persuaded of the policy there will be in augmenting every company with at least ten of these men, or more if they can be obtained; for I am convinced, that, by such an incorporation, they will make exceedingly cheap and valuable recruits, and, being able-bodied and disciplined men, will give a strength and solidity to our regiments, which they will not otherwise acquire this

[1] Such parts of this letter as are printed in italics were written cypher.

campaign. All my accounts respecting the recruiting service are unfavorable; indeed, not a single recruit has arrived, (to my knowledge,) from any State except Rhode Island, in consequence of the requisitions of Congress in December last.

Should the plan be adopted by Congress, the sooner it is carried into execution the better. In that case, I think the men ought to be recruited for the continent, and not carried to the credit of the States' quotas with whose lines they are to serve. For, without making any alteration in the establishment, they may be annexed to the regiments in such a manner, as that they can be formed into distinct corps whenever their fidelity and attachment shall be sufficiently evinced, if circumstances should then require. All the matters of bounty and encouragement being arranged with the financier, and the particulars of the scheme adjusted, as soon as provision shall be made for their subsistence on the journey, I would detach a captain and subn. from every regiment, to receive and conduct them to the army, so that they may certainly join the respective regiments, at farthest, by the 1st of June. In the interim, I would beg leave to propose, lest the enemy should attempt to counteract the design, that the business should be kept secret, until it is ripe for execution; and then be negotiated by some gentleman of address appointed for the purpose. I request an answer as speedily as possible. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. I am just favored with your letters of the 20th and 23d instants—I think it would be well to

permit such of the prisoners mentioned by you to return to their Regts. as can procure testimonials in their favor—I submit the matter to your discretion.

TO THE CHEVALIER DE LA LUZERNE.

NEWBURG, April 28, 1782.

SIR,

I receive with much gratitude the remembrances and compliments of the principal officers of the French army in Virginia, and thank your Excellency for the trouble of being the bearer of them to me, and the letter from Count de Rochambeau.

With equal sensibility and pleasure I received and do now acknowledge my obligations to your Excellency for the communications from your Court; which tho not decisive, are nevertheless important. The late instance of their generous aid, hinted at by your Excellency and particularized by Mr. Morris, is one among a variety of important considerations, which ought to bind America to France in Bonds of indelible friendship and gratitude, never, I hope, to be sundered.[1] Induced by that entire confidence, which I repose in your Excellency, and a full conviction that a nation, which combines her force with ours for purposes of all others most interesting to humanity,

[1] Alluding to a loan of six millions of livres, which, after hearing of the capitulation at Yorktown, the King of France had resolved to make to the United States within the coming year; although, previously to that event, M. de la Luzerne had been instructed to inform Congress in positive terms, that no more money could be expected from France. It was thought expedient not to make this intelligence public for a time, lest it should diminish the efforts of the people in providing for the continuance of the war.

ought not to be deficient of any information I can give to point objects to means, that an accordance of them may be inseparable, I shall without hesitation give you the state of our present force, and my ideas of the increase of it by recruits, from the best view of it which lyes before me.

It can scarcely be necessary to inform yr. Excellency that our military establishment for the present year consists of 4 Regiments of Artillery, 4 Legionary and two partisan corps, and 50 Regiments of Infantry, besides the Corps of Invalids ; or that Congress have called in pointed terms upon each State to compleat its Regiments to the establishment, the aggregate of which, if complied with, would amount to 34,308 men, exclusive of commissioned officers, sergeants, and music, Hazen's Regiment, and the corps of Invalids. Of this force, one Legionary Corps, two regmts. of artillery, and 22 of Infantry, besides Hazen's Regt. and the Invalids, compose the northern army. But as Hazen's regiment is fostered by no State, discouraged from recruiting by all, and without funds, if the case was otherwise it must soon dwindle to nothing, (being now very weak).

The present totality of the Rank and File, exclusive of sergeants, of these Regimts. which compose the northern army, amounts to 9,146. From this number the Sick, men in different branches of the staff department, and such as are employed on other extra duties, (which the peculiarity of our circumstances compels me to furnish from ye army,) being deducted, will reduce the efficient operating force of

these corps to 7,553 Rank and file; and I should be uncandid if I was not to acknowledge, that I do not expect it will be increased by recruits in the course of the campaign to more than 10,000 fit for Duty in the Field. This, Sir, in my opinion, will be the full amount of the established Regts. of the States East of Pensylvania. To ascertain the number of Militia, which may be assembled for occasional offensive operations, is more than I can do. The general opinion is, that there will be no want of militia for any enterprise we can have in view. Be this as it may, this one thing is certain, that this class of men are not only slow in their movements, but, undertaking to judge also of the propriety of them, in point of am'nt will wait till the *necessity* for it *strikes them;* which, in most cases, is as injurious to the Service as inability or want of inclination; disappointment being the consequence of delay. This observation I could not refrain making, because, in all combined operations, especially those which may depend upon the Season or a limited period for their execution it is of the utmost importance to be known.

The enclosed return, wch. is a copy of the last State of the force under the orders of Majr-Genl. Greene (wch has come to my hands,) will give your Excellency every information in my power respecting the State and condition of that army; which was to be augmented by the Partisan Corps of Colo. Armand, consisting of about 200 horse and foot. Independent of those, there are two small regts. at Fort Pitt, one from ye State of Pensylva., the other from Virga.,

which are included in the general establishmt. of the army; but no partr. return is here given of them.

What measures are adopted by the States of Georgia and No. and So. Carolina to recruit their battalions, I know not. Virginia marched abt. 400 men the latter end of Feby. for the southern army, and by an act of the Legislature passed at their last Session, resolved to raise more; but in what forwardness they are, or what is to be expected from the act, I am equally uninformed. Maryland and Pensylvania depend upon voluntary enlistments, and are proceeding very slow in the business of recruiting, especially the latter. It is impossible for me, therefore, to say to what number that army will be increased.

This, Sir, is an accurate state of the force we have at present, and my expectation of what it may be, independent of militia.

The enemy's Force, from the best information I have been able to obtain of it, may stand thus. At New York, Regulars, includg. their established corps of provincials, Rank and File, nine thousand; militia of the city, Refugees, and Indept. Companies, 4,000; sailors and marines, accordg. to the No. of ships, whch. may be in the harbr., and this being uncertn., no numbr. is given now in N. Y. 13,000; Charleston abt. 3,300; Savannah abt. 700. In Canada, including British, German, and Established Provinls., 5,000; Penobscot abt. 500; Halifax and its dependencies, uncertain, but say 3,500; In all, 26,000.

The above estimate, so far as it respects New

York, Charleston, and Savannah, is I believe to be depended upon. The force of Canada by some accts. is more, by others less, than 5,000. The regular British and German Troops in that country cannot exceed 4,000 ; but, in addition to these, are the corps of Sir John Johnson and others, which I am told have been considerably increased by the disaffected of this and other States, who have fled to Canada. But it is to be observed, that this force, be it what it may, is employed in the *occupation* of posts between Quebec and Michilimackinac, and on Lake Champlain, through an extent of not less than 7 or 800 miles, and that all these Posts are dependent upon the former for provision and supplies of every kind. I am less certain of the Enemy's force in Nova Scotia than elsewhere. The number here given is not from recent intelligence, and may be erroneous, as their garrisons are weakened or strengthened according to circumstances. Cumberland, Windsor, Annapolis, and St. John's River, &c. are posts dependent on Halifax, and included in the 3.500 men here mentioned.

If this state of matters be satisfactory to your Excellency, or useful in the formation of any plans against the common Enemy, I shall be very happy in having given it.

Permit me now, Sir, to express the high sense I have of the honor you have done me in communicating the favorable opinion entertained of my conduct by the Court and nation of France, and to acknowledge my obligation to those officers, who have in-

spired these Sentiments. To stand well in the eyes of a nation, whch. I view as one of the first in the world, and in the opinion of a monarch, whom I consider as the supporter of the rights of humanity, and to whom I am personally indebted for the command he has been pleased to honor me with, is highly flattering to my vanity, at the same time it has a first claim to all my gratitude.[1] It is unnecessary, I hope, to add fresh assurances of the respect and esteem, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, 30 April, 1782.

SIR,

I have the honor to transmit to your Excellency copies of the minutes of proceedings and reports of my commissioners appointed to meet commissioners on the part of the British general, Sir Henry Clinton, for the purposes mentioned in their instructions (copy of which is herewith communicated).[2] A pri-

[1] *From M. de la Luzerne's Letter.*—"I cannot deny myself the pleasure of informing you of the sentiments, with which the reports of the French officers on their return to Versailles, inspired the court and nation towards your Excellency. Their testimony can add nothing to the universal opinion respecting the great services, which you have rendered to your country; but, to the esteem and admiration of the French, will henceforth be added a sentiment of affection and attachment, which is a just return for the attentions our officers have received from you, and for the progress they have made in their profession by serving under your orders."—April 18th.

[2] The British commissioners were General Dalrymple and Mr. Andrew Elliot. Three principal points were brought into discussion: a cartel for a general exchange of prisoners; a liquidation of all accounts on both sides for the maintenance of prisoners; and provision for their future support. In Sir Henry

vate letter from my commissioners, and a letter from Sir Henry Clinton, both written in consequence of this negotiation, are also enclosed for the observation of Congress.

After this display of the subject it is unnecessary, and it might be improper, for me to make any observations on these papers. I submit them to the wisdom of Congress, and have only to beg for my own direction, that I may be early informed of their determination, how far any future exchanges of prisoners of war shall be continued, under the practice which has been formerly adopted for that purpose. I beg leave to point the attention of Congress particularly to that part of the commissioners' letter to me, which mentions the extension of a pardon to the refugees in service of the enemy. Their ideas on this subject are so perfectly consonant to my own, formed on the principles of policy and expediency, that I cannot omit to notice it, and to submit to the consideration of Congress, whether the adopting this measure under proper restrictions may not be at-

Clinton's letter to Washington, stating the results of the negotiation as reported by his commissioners, he complains that the Americans made unreasonable demands: first, in requiring him to agree to an exchange of prisoners in all parts of the world, whereas it was known that his powers extended to such only as had been captured in America; secondly, in an exorbitant requisition of two hundred thousand pounds sterling, as the balance due to the United States for the maintenance of British prisoners from the beginning of hostilities to that time, whereas, in Sir Henry's opinion, the balance was greatly in his favor; and thirdly, in demanding that, for the future, provisions should not be purchased in the United States for the support of British prisoners, but should be sent to them from the British posts. On these essential points, as well as on many others of less moment, the difference of opinion was so great that no arrangement could be effected.—See SPARKS' *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. i., p. 242.

tended with happy consequences to our cause, and be equally productive of ruin and confusion to the British interests in America. Lamenting that the benevolence of my intentions has been so totally defeated, by the unhappy and fruitless issue of this negotiation, I have only to add, that, with the most perfect regard, I am, &c.

PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

NEWBURGH, 1 May, 1782.

Unacquainted with the determinations of the Court of France respecting the succor which may, in their extensive arrangements for the Campaign of 1782, be generously extended to the Service of America, or indeed knowing what to expect from the States, in consequence of the requisitions of Congress for Men and Supplies; it is impossible to point operations to particular objects. But as it may give facility to future determinations, to take a comprehensive view of the Enemy's strength in different parts of America, and see with what force and means, in what manner, and with what prospect, it can best be assailed, the following statements are made, and thoughts result:—

The enemy's effective force in America, from the best information that has been received of it, may be estimated as follows, viz:—

First, at New York and its Dependencies	RANK & FILE.	
Regulars, including the established Provine. Corps,	9,000	
City Militia, Independent Companies and Refugees,	4,000	
Sailors and Marines, as these depend upon circumstans. none will be put down.		13,000
Second, Southern States		
Charles Town	3,300	
Savanna	700	4,000

Third, Canada		
Regulars and established Provincials.....		5,000
Fourth, Hallifax and Penobscot		
Hallifax and its Dependencies.....	3,500	
Penobscot	500	4,000
Total.....		26,000

The foregoing estimate exhibits four distinct objects to view; each of which tho' in different degrees, is important, and worthy of consideration.—

The first is, undoubtedly, of the greatest magnitude; and the most beneficial consequences will result from a successful operation against it. Consequently it is to be preferred, if our force and means are adequate to the enterprise and the season should favor. These are matters of very serious consideration, as a disappointment would not only disgrace our Arms, but would involve the States in a heavy and ruinous expence.—

Whether the second or third should claim our next attention (if we are unable to prosecute the first,) is a matter of serious enquiry, and can best be determined by a comparative and impartial view of the advantages of each, which, as far as my knowledge of them extend, I will state in favor of

CAROLINA AND GEORGIA.

The wishes, the feelings, the long sufferings, and the distresses of the Southern States in general, and these two in particular, especially in the deprivation of their Capitols, their trade, (which is of such a nature as to make favorable remittances for continental, as well as local purposes)—and the principal Gentlemen of the Country of their homes, and

CANADA.

The Annexation of so capitol a Province as this (Canada) to the Federal Union, the consequent subduction of all the Northern and Western Indians, and the restoration of Peace and quietness to such an extensive Frontier as we have from the River St. John's, in the Bay of Fundy, to the Holstein in No. Carolina, are matters of great moment, and worthy of

the comforts of life, must have great weight in this scale—

Especially when it is considered, what effect the disappointment might have upon the minds of a people who have already conceived themselves neglected—and who, just beginning to immerge from the deplorable situation into which their country had been thrown by the cruel invasion of it, are now exerting themselves to support the common cause, in high expectation more than probable, of being speedily emancipated from the force which at present possesses their Capitols.

Under these circumstances, it may be difficult to bring to their view remote advantages, tho' ever so important, upon the large or general scale; and if disgust and resentment should be the consequence of disappointment, it may have an unhappy influence on our Plans, in our councils, and upon our public measures in general.

Besides, there is one powerful argument in favor of the Southern Expedition (if we can be effectually covered by a fleet, without which it is folly even to think of one) and that is, a moral certainty of success, for the most serious attention. Especially too, when it is considered, that in the case of Charles Town and Savanna, if the enemy can be confined within their lines, the Inhabitants of So. Carolina and Georgia are suffering a temporary suspension *only* of their property in, and the inconveniences of, those Towns, and some impediments to their Trade. Whereas in the other case, multitudes of helpless families (which it is impossible to protect) are daily murdered, or carried into hopeless captivity by the Savages; whole settlements destroyed; and our Northern and Western frontier of more than a thousand miles in extent, continually retreating before a cruel and bloodthirsty enemy, who desolate as they go.

Besides these, an expedition into Canada would at once develop the mysterious conduct of the people of Vermont; bring them to an explanation in a manner of all others the most advantageous to us, and unexceptionable to themselves; disconcert the projects of the enemy if they are in league with the rulers of these people; and turn the arms and resources with which they were flattered,

knowing the number of the enemy which compose the Garrisons of Charles Town and Savanna, and the strength of their works ; and that they have no exterior resources, we can adduce such a force as cannot upon the common rules of calculation, fail to insure success.

Whereas many unforeseen difficulties may cast up in Canada.—We may find, notwithstanding the flattering acc'ts of the friendly disposition of its Inhabitants, and their wishes to be released from the yoke of British tyranny, that a hostile disposition may appear in many of them, whilst a painful neutrality pervades the rest.

Add to these reasons, that under the most favorable circumstances that can reasonably be expected, — one campaign can do little more than give us a firm establishment in the country—and *perhaps* possession of their upper Posts—To expect the conquest of Quebec the same season, unless by the dispersion of the force in Canada, and the impracticability of assembling it, we should find Quebec weakly Garrisoned, illy provided with provisions, or Military Stores, or a disposition in the Country to rise as one against them. For the Vermontese having often sollicited an expedition into Canada, with strong assurances of support, durst not refuse their aid if called upon, when a heavy body of Troops were marching through their Country, avowedly, and apparently to remove the source of the evils they have complain'd of, and which has been the ostensible reason assigned for their temporizing conduct with the enemy in Canada.

To these considerations may be added, that an expedition into that Country, if undertaken with sufficient means, and in a proper season and manner, will cost very little more than the expensive, but ineffectual modes which are now pursuing by the Continent agregately and the States individually, for defence of them ; while the latter is an annual expence under all the disadvantages and evils here enumerated ; and the other, by putting the axe to the root, would remove the cause, and make a radical cure.

I shall say nothing of the benefits which America would derive, and the injury Great Britain must sustain, by the Fur and other trade of Canada shifting hands. Nor of the im-

Man, to exterminate the British force, would exhibit greater proofs of a sanguine temper than a deliberate judgment.

mense importance it must be to the future peace and quiet of these States, especially the Western parts of them, to annihilate the British Interest in that country; thereby putting a stop to their intriguing after Peace shall be established. These are too obvious to stand in need of illustration—they will speak for themselves.

To all which may be added by way of questions, proper for Gent'n of the Navy to resolve —Whether a Fleet sufficient to protect the siege of Charles Town can lye there in safety during the operation? Whether Chesapeake Bay, which is the nearest port for Ships of the Line, would afford sufficient cover, and give proper security to the Besiegers and their convoys during the Siege? and what will be the probable consequences of the enterprise, if both these questions should be resolved in the negative.

HALLIFAX—

With which I connect Penobscot—is, of the four Statements, least important, considered in a separate point of view; but if our force should be unequal to the enterprise against New York; or other circumstances should render the attack of that place unadvisable, and we could nevertheless combine these with Canada, and carry on both expeditions at once with a probability of success; it would add more weight to the reasons given in

support of an Expedition into that Country ; and in case of success, would be of the utmost importance, as it would add much, not only to the security of the trade of Canada, but the United States in General ; give a well grounded hope of rescuing the Fisheries from Great Britain, which will most essentially injure her Marine ; while it would lay a foundation, on which to build one of our own—It would confine the enemy to one harbor—and if that (New York) should be taken from them, deprive them of every port in America ; thereby adding greatly to the security of our shipping upon this Coast—They would in that case have no Port in which they cd. heave down and refit their heavy ships ; their West India Islands (if any should remain to them) would be considerably distressed in the article of Lumber—and lastly, another Province (Nova Scotia), which sometime ago was very desirous of it, would be added to the Federal Union.—

Having given these general ideas respecting the objects which invite to Military enterprises, I will next make an estimate of the force which, in my judgment is necessary to each. But it must be established as positions :—

First.—That to undertake the reduction of New York, upon a well grounded plan, indeed with any hope of success, we must not only have a superior Naval force, but a moral certainty of maintaining it. And that that force, or part of it, ought, if *possible*, to be in possession of the harbor, to cover the Besiegers, secure their communications, and facilitate transportation ;—at the same time that the enemy, thereby, are effectually deprived of Succors and Supplies.

Second.—That to undertake the reduction of Charles Town—or Hallifax, without having, and holding, such Naval Force, would be folly in the extreme.

Third.—That tho' a Naval force would be advantageous and might greatly facilitate the entire conquest of Canada, it is not absolutely necessary to the establishment of a force in the heart of the Country. In a Siege of Quebec—for the purpose of convoying Ordnance, Stores and Provisions proper for it—and depriving the Enemy of all succor by sea, a few ships in the St. Laurence (Frigates might answer) would be highly necessary.

The above being the Basis on which either of the Enterprises here mentioned should be undertaken, I think upon every rule of Military propriety we should have for the attempt against

NEW YORK

Three times the force which compose the Garrison of it, to enable us to carry on the Siege with spirit and vigor, and to give a well grounded hope of a successful issue. Less than this number, considering the Posts we shall have to occupy, and communications to establish, would reduce us to one point of attack; or subject us to the hazard of being beaten in detail if we attempted two; when the propriety of approaching the City by the way of Brooklyn and York Island at, or about the same time, is so obviously necessary to a vigorous siege, that nothing but inability should dispence with it. Upon this calculation then, New York will require—39,000 Men. But as it may be difficult to obtain these, as a less number in a greater space of time may effect the reduction of the place, and as an attempt (even under these disadvantages) may be preferable to any other enterprise it may be asked.—

First—What is the smallest number of men with which the Siege of N. York can be undertaken under these circumstances?

Second—To how late a period of the Campaign can the commencement of the operations be delayed, without hazarding a defeat from the cold of the Autumn?

Third—Whether we may rely absolutely upon the support of the Fleet during the operation, be it long or short—early or late, in the season?

The orders of the Court of France, or the admiral, alone can determine the last; but with respect to the other two, I think 25,000 effective men, fifteen thousand of which to be regular Troops, have a tolerable good chance of reducing the Post in less than three months—consequently, the commencement ought not to be delay'd beyond the first of September—as the difficulty, proceeding from the want of *wood alone* will be found almost, if not quite insurmountable, especially upon York Island (where there is not a stick) unless we can secure the navigation

of the No. River, by passing a Frigate or two above the Enemy's Works.—

CHARLES TOWN AND SAVANNA

Are here classed together, because there can be little doubt of the latter's being united to the former, upon the first appearance of a movement that way if it can be done. For this service, I should suppose 8,000 men in addition to the regular force with Gen'l Greene, and such aids as the Country can throw in, if necessary, will be fully competent to the enterprise, which cannot, on acc't of the heat, and sickly season, be commenced before October.—

CANADA.

If the Expedition is sufficiently masked it will not require (to march by Land) more than 8,000 men ; for altho' some Accounts make the force of the enemy in that Country equal to this number, yet dispersed as it is, and so far apart, if the intention is concealed till the moment of execution, and the movements are then rapid, it will be impossible to assemble it in time to oppose such a body. Two thousand in addition to these, to go round by water as has been already mentioned, and for the purpose expressed, would make a firm establishment in the heart of that Country, and very probably reduce every Post in it by January, except Quebec ; the conquest of which, as has been observed before, depends upon contingencies.

If the Expedition is wholly conducted by Land, about the first of September will be the best time to begin the march, on account of the Roads, the waters, and the Provision ; for harvest being then over, Bread and Forage will be plenty on the Routes the Army will move ; and in Canada ; and it will be too late for the enemy to send reinforcements, or supplies into that Country.—

If it is to be by Land and Water, the sooner perhaps it commences the better, because a supply of Provisions can be sent round in the Transports ; and the ships of war will cut of all succor to the Enemy ; and their supplies of every kind.

HALLIFAX

I can say less to than any other object, having no late acc'ts of the strength of the Works, number of the Garrison, or temper of

the Inhabitants. [By] the best information, however, which I have been able to obtain, the first has been encreased, and considerably strengthened within the last two or three years ; the second may be about what I have estimated them at ; and with regard to the third, nothing decisive can be said. The whole amount of the Militia of that Government is about 5,000 ; and some time ago they were very desirous of being united with the Confederated States of America ; but what changes or revolutions may have taken place in their system of Politicks, from the little, or no prospect of emancipation held up to them, I cannot undertake to determine.—Under the best view of the matter I have, I should think less than 8,000 men would be inadequate.

BURMUDA

Being rather extraneous, was not taken into the general view ; but as it is a harbor from which many Privateers are sent to annoy our Trade, as great part of the Inhabitants are well affected to the American cause,—wish to be connected with us, and depend in a very great degree upon America for subsistence, it may not be amiss to give it some consideration, as circumstances in the course of the Campaign may lead to the Conquest of this Island, without incurring much expence, or interfering with other Plans—Policy in this case may invite the measure whether it is adopted with a view of retaining or ceding the Island by way of composition at a general pacification.—

The force on the Island, by the best accounts I have had thence does not exceed three or 400 Invalids, in unimportant Works commanded by higher ground within a short distance.

One 50 Gun ship and three or four Frigates, with about 1,000 Land Troops (to be transported in the Frigates) would be competent, it is conceived, to the reduction of this Island ; if the Enterprise is properly conducted and accompanied in the first instance with such offers as will be pleasing to the Inhabitants.

Having in the preceding pages pointed to the different objects which present themselves to view, the strength of each, and the force requisite for its subduction ; I shall next give my ideas of the mode of attacking them—or such of them—as my knowledge

of their situation will enable me to form a judgment upon. And first of

NEW YORK.

The mode of attacking this place must depend, in a great measure, upon a pretty accurate knowledge of what our Force will be at the time fixed upon for the commencement of the operations. For if it should be adjudged competent—and the measure in its nature practicable without considerable loss, we ought, in my opinion, to make two approaches at, or about the same time. If it is not, the principal part of our force must be conducted to one point; and the attack must succeed, instead of being combined with each other. In either case, the approaches may differ; the fairest way therefore of determining upon the best, is to consider

First.—The present situation of the force we are actually possessed of.

Second.—From whence our succors are to come.

Third.—The points from whence our Provisions, Siege Artillery, Military Stores, Boats and other supplies are to be drawn, and

Fourth.—Which is essentially necessary—whether possession of the interior Harbor of New York by the French Fleet can be so far depended upon as to warrant anterior movements which may prove pernicious if this event should not happen.—And above all, whether it will engage to co-operate to the end of the Siege, be it long or short.

With respect to the first, it is very immaterial so far as the Continental Troops are concerned, because they can be moved to any point with almost equal convenience—but if the French Army is to march by Land from Virginia, their going to Staten Island (one of the approaches to Brooklyn), or to Westchester, will make a difference of ten days, allowing for the passage of the North River.

As I shall include Maryland among the States which will be called upon for Militia—and New York is nearly as convenient to one point as another $\frac{8}{9}$ths of the whole requisition will be demanded of Connecticut, and the States Eastward of it; $\frac{1}{9}$ths of

New Jersey and those South of it; and the remaining $\frac{5}{31}$ths will come from New York—which is full information respecting the second article of succors.—

With respect to the third, the greatest part of the Siege Artillery, a large proportion of Shott, Shells and other Military Stores, lay at Philadelphia; and in the Jerseys. The Boats are in the North River and Eastward of it; and a good deal of the Powder is deposited at West Point, and in the vicinity of it—The Flour is to be transported principally from New Jersey and the States Southward of it—and the Beef will come on foot from the Eastward.—

On the 4th Article I can form no decisive opinion. But full and absolute possession of the harbor is of such immense importance in an attack upon New York, and will contribute so much to the security of our communications, safety of our convoys, and speedy reduction of the Garrison, that no means ought, in my opinion, to be left unessayed to accomplish it. And in the weak and defenceless state the harbor is in at present, nothing would be more easy and certain, than to effect this by surprize, if the Squadron destined for this coast could detach previous to its Sailing from the West Indies, a few Ships to gain possession; thereby facilitating the entrance of the others; which might, and indeed ought, speedily to follow.—

The Lines on York Island, and the Works at Brooklyn are the two avenues to the Town. To arrive at the first, there is but one way, except it can be done by stratagem (which is too precarious to be admitted into any Plan,) and that is by forcing the passage of Harlaem River—The approach to the second may be either by Staten Island or Frogs Neck, (if it should be preferred to Morrissania); each of which supposing the Fleet to be in possession of the Bay, which is to be considered as a Basis, has its advantages as follows—

Staten Island	Frog's Neck or Morrissania
Would, in the very commencement of our movements to Invest New York, give us all the advantages of a full intercourse,	Is equally, indeed more convenient, to the Continental Troops and York Militia, than Staten Island; and is much more

and perfect co-operation with the Fleet; would afford protection to it under all circumstances, and at all seasons; even supposing it to be blockaded by a superior Navy; would be convenient to the French Troops marching from Virginia—more convenient to any which may arrive in the Fleet to debark at, than any other place; more advantageous on account of the heavy Artillery, Stores, &c., which may come in, or belong to the Fleet; or which shall be transported from Phila. or Virginia by Water; and much more convenient to all such as shall be transported by Land from either of these places, or the Furnaces in N. Jersey.

—It will be nearer to our supplies of Bread and Flour; more contiguous to Brooklyn and much more so to Bergen and Paulus hook.

—It cuts off (with the assistance of a ship or two in the Sound) every possibility of a retreat of the Enemy; and, more than probably, would possess, unexpectedly, the Forage and other resources which they may be holding in reserve on Staten and Long Island; while they attempt to forage, or destroy the Grain and Grass in so to the Militia Eastward of the North River. It is more convenient on account of the Boats, and our Beef Cattle. It will also be an advantageous position so soon as a force sufficient to maintain it, can be assembled. —It looks equally to York and Long Island, and may have works thrown up to facilitate the passage to either, or both, as circumstances may point, —while the Enemy, by being suspended between the two, will either neglect one or weaken both. The communication between the main and Long Island may be rendered easier and more secure; consequently, a retreat in case of a disaster, safer by the way of Frog's Neck or Morrissania than by that of Staten Island; because in the first case, there is only one water to cross, which may be covered by Batteries—and in the other, two; one of which (from Staten to Long Island) is rather difficult and uncertain; and should we not possess, or by any mischance loose, the command of the Bay between the Narrows and the city might become very dangerous.—On the other hand, our Land communication from the place of disembarkation, will, when we are established before Brook-

Westchester, with a view of depriving us of them. Besides the reasons here given, we should be more convenient to the forage of Jersey, and the States South of it; from whence the greater part of this article must come, and it might act as a stimulus to the militia of those States, as their march would be shortened by it.

lyn, not only be much shorter by the way of Staten Island, but more secure than the other by Frogs Neck or Morrissania; as the first may be reduced to about two miles of good road with a covered Flank—the latter will be at least twelve, of rugged road, with a Flank exposed to Partezan strokes of the enemy from New York the greatest part of the way.

Under this state of matters, it is not easy to determine on which side to incline.—To approach by the way of Westchester, seems to be the safest; by Staten Island, the most convenient. If the latter should be adopted, it will, more than probable, draw the principal part, if not the whole of the enemy's force from the North end of York Island to the city—but whether it does or not, there should be a body of five or 6000 Militia and a few Continental Troops in the vicinity of Kings bridge, to complete the Investiture of the Island, establish communications, and be ready to take advantage of circumstances. If the former should be preferred, the effect will be reversed; and except the Guards which may be necessary for the city, and the stores that are in it, the whole force of the enemy will, I expect, take a position at McGowans heights; where the Island being narrow, and ground commanding, they could maintain themselves in the Works they now have, or could soon throw up, against numbers much superior to their own; and would only be drawn from it by a movement to Brooklyn, by way of Morrissania or Frog's Neck.

Upon the whole, if our force was such as to enable us to make two attacks, and each division was decidedly superior to the enemy's whole force, I should, in that case, be of opinion:—

That we had better approach New York by the way of Staten Island and Westchester at the same time, because by beginning at the two extreme points, we shall distract the enemy and oblige them to give up one, or weaken themselves at both ends of York Island. If it is not sufficient, I then think—

That the safety of operating by the way of Westchester, the advantages of looking to two points—viz—York and Long Island at the same time, and of assembling our force, and advancing as we acquire strength, and can do it with safety, is to be preferred to the conveniency of Staten Island—especially as the propriety of approaching by the latter, depends upon the position of the French Fleet, of which we can have no previous assurance.

CHARLES TOWN.

If Charles Town should be the object of the Campaign, the French and other Troops destined for this Service must be transported by water—so must the Siege and other Artillery, ordnance and other Stores, Flour, Salt Provision, salt and spirits. A Land Transportation of Artillery and Military Stores adequate to the Siege of this place, would, in our circumstances, be found impracticable. And to march men thither by Land, would, (as we have too often experienced already) dissipate half of them by sickness, desertion and other causes. The Artillery and Saddle Horses might go by Land, and by preceding the embarkation of the Troops, reach some given point by the time the Transports arrive at the Post to which they are destined.—

For the Voyage, and support of the Troops in the first stages of the Siege—till the resources of the Country can be collected —we ought to go provided with at least two Months' Provision—three would be still better.

Philadelphia, under present circumstances and appearances, seems best adapted for the Embarkation ; as a sufficient number of Transports may probably be had there ; and any number, if brought there, can be fitted for the accommodation of Troops.

The most convenient, and advantageous place to debark at would be Stone Inlet ; provided the Banks of the River bearing that name (and seperating Johns and James Islands) are not possessed and fortified by the Enemy.—This Inlet, while that of Charles Town is in possession of the enemy, not only affords the best Harbor for the Transports, but is the most convenient approach from the sea to the City ; the most advantageous for forming a junction with the Troops under the command of Majr.

Genl. Greene ; and for cutting off the retreat of the Garrison of Savanna to Charles Town. And measures must be previously taken by Genl. Greene to prevent their doing it to St. Augustine, by Land :—

To go into a minute detail of the approaches from the place of debarkation to the Enemy's Lines before Charles Town, is more than I am able to do. But Charles Town Neck must be possessed in force ; and to do it, the Ashley river must be crossed as near their Works as it can be done with Safety. Our principal operation will be on this neck, between the Rivers Ashley and Cowper, and a secure communication must be established by the nearest convenient route from hence to the shipping in Stone Inlet; which, as it will lye exposed to the Enemy's whole force, will be a good deal exposed while they have the command of the harbor of Charles Town.

Canada.

If an Expedition into this country should be adopted, from choice or necessity—it must be conducted either by Land wholly or by Land and Water conjointly, according to circumstances. The last is to be preferred but the former may do—I shall point to the Measures which to me appear necessary in both cases—and first by

Land.

The Army should commence its march in the Columns—the right column to proceed by the way of Connecticut River, Co'os and Hazen's new Road. The left, by Albany, Bennington, Manchester, Shrewsbury, and Otter Creek, keeping Lake Champlain on the Left, and the Green Mountain on the right, till the junction is formed ; which should be about the River Michiscone, five or 6 miles from the Canada line, and may be (by bringing them together more at right angles) at the River A La Moelle, if circumstances should require the junction sooner, or if it should be conceived more beneficial, on acc't of water carriage, and the communications which may be useful hereafter (in case we should obtain the command of Lake Champlain, which we ought never

to lose sight of)—the left column may advance by the way of Fort Edward, Fort Anne, South Bay and Ticonderoga to the other Road by Bennington, and form a junction with it or Otter Creek.

The March of the two columns shou'd be so ordered, as that each may arrive at the place destined for the junction at the same time; and for this purpose the best judgment of the March of each should be previously formed; and a mode of corresponding fixed on, to regulate the advances by, afterwards. The left column, as it will be more exposed than the right, will have the most extensive communication and the greatest difficulty to open and secure it, should consist of 5,000 men; the other of 3,000—both ought to have French Troops in them, that the Canadians in any stage of the march, may have ocular proof of our Alliance with France, and their co-operation with us. Some Cavalry should march with each column; and all the Indians that can be obtained.

The object of this Expedition, should be masked as long as the nature of the movements can possibly conceal it, and the march afterwards should be with as much celerity as it can be performed without injury to the Troops.

The first object of the Troops, should be to penetrate into the Heart of the Country before the enemy can assemble their scattered forces; and take such a position as will prevent the junction of them afterwards. The Country of St. Denis, between the Sorrel and St. Lawrence, seems well situated to answer this end. To effect this, and prepare for the Winter Cantonments and subsistence of the Army, is all that can be counted upon without Heavy Artillery—to transport which, and the stores necessary to it by Land, would be next to impossible. But when the Frost closes the Lake Chamn., the Enemy's armed vessels therein *must* be possessed, or destroyed; or if neither of these can be done, nor the Post at St. John's reduced; then to establish one at the Isle aux Noix, that we may, by cutting the enemy off from Lake Champlain open a communication by water for our Siege Artillery, and heavy stores in the Spring.

If any thing further is undertaken in the course of the Winter, must be from the circumstances of the Moment; and not con-

sequential of any general and preconcerted plan—one or two Armed Boats with sails, should be built in the course of the Winter at a Post which may be established at the South end of Lake Champlain (Fort Anne for Instance), and a sufficient number of Batteaux should be transported from the North River to the same place, while the sledding is favorable. This Season should also be embraced for transporting the heavy Artillery, stores, and Provisions from the one water to the other.

In the first instance, our Provision of the meat kind will transport itself ; and it is expected that the upper parts of Connecticut River and the New Hampshire Grants (or Vermont as it is called) ; with such aid as Canada can afford, will supply the Flour. Our Baggage should be light, and as Field Artillery only will be taken, our movements may be quick.

Land and Water.

The only difference between this and the last is that our heavy Artillery, Provisions and Stores, may go in the first instance by water ; with such an additional force as will enable us to commence the Siege of Quebec, or some other Capital post, immediately ; and, that the Expedition may be undertaken without a moment's unnecessary delay—and the earlier the better,—as the French fleet in the St. Lawrence will intercept succors and supplies by water to the enemy, if any should be attempted—whereas if it is confined to a Land operation altogether, it must be delayed till August, on acct. of Harvest, and because it may be too late after that for the enemy to reinforce till next Year.

Hallifax.

Provisions, and every article necessary for the Siege, must be transported thither with the force destined for the Expedition, as there can be no dependence upon the Country. The best place to debark the troops at, is Sambro Bay, by the Light House, about 15 miles from Hallifax ; and to march by Jerusalem to the reverse of the Town ; which *is* more accessable, and *was* least fortified. How it may be now, I cannot say.

PENOBSCOT

Alone, is scarcely an object; but might be visited en passant, in the Expedition to Hallifax, or Canada by water; and would give some eclat to either of those enterprises, for the fall of it can scarcely be doubted, if attempted.

If the enterprise is unconnected with any other object, 1,500 men will be sufficient to employ on the Expedition.

BERMUDA.

Some good, and no bad consequences can result from an attempt to take this Island by Surprise. To effect it, the ships destined for this Expedition should hoist British colors as soon as they get in sight of Land; and adopt every other means to carry on the deception untill proper Pilots are procured at the West end of the Island. The ships should next pursue their course as near the South side of the Island as prudence will admit. When they arrive opposite the mouth of Castle Harbor,—all except one or two, should immediately enter and begin the attack on the Castle without loss of time; the other ships should continue their course a few miles further, and bring to about a mile distance from the Mouth of St. George's Harbor, to prevent the escape of any Vessels from thence. If this could be done in the night, and troops landed under that cover, it is more than probable the Castle, and consequently the Island, might be carried without much, if any opposition; for it is presumed very little would come from the Inhabitants who have often expressed a wish to be united with America and enjoy the benefits of its support.[1]

[1] This plan of campaign was drawn up by Washington himself, every line of the manuscript being in his own hand.

END OF VOL. IX.

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